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A DAY OF LIFE

and

Other Poems

BY

CLARENCE SHARP



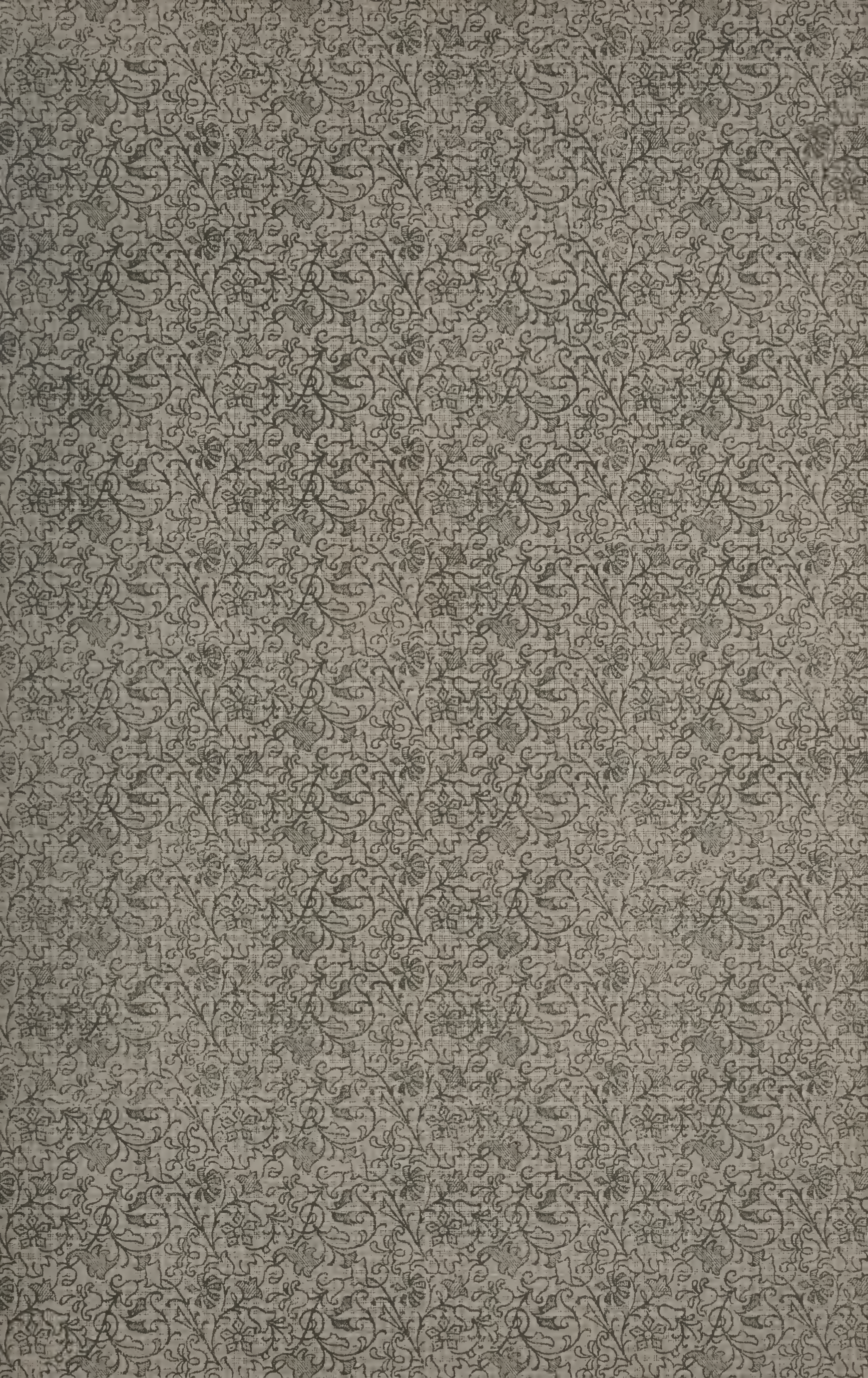
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A Day of Life

and OTHER POEMS

— BY —

CLARENCE SHARP

Editor of The Country Bard

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IN HONOR OF MY MOTHER
MARY AIGLER SHARP
WHO ONE DAY SAID TO ME
MANY YEARS AGO
“CLARENCE,
WHY DON'T YOU PUT YOUR POEMS IN A BOOK?”

Gift
Author
July 23, 1930

MY PREFERENCE

*When flames the coreopsis and shines the golden glow,
When autumn suns are beaming and days are passing slow,
Then I like to hie me walking somewhere far and wide,
As out through weedy meadows or by the woodland side.*

*When from cattle in the pasture to the haze upon the hills,
There's a dreaminess of quiet all the sunny air fills,—
And from books and men and turmoil I get so far away,
I begin to understand again the things that they did say,*

*The Doughtys and the Kensetts, the Durands and Casilears,
When in early days they painted afar from care and fears
The landscape of our homeland—and I read him better, too,
Our Quaker poet lineing his sweet pastorals through.*

*And I worship at an altar that today can hardly trace,
And I wonder at the wisdom and the genius and grace
Of those who loved a beauty of the quiet, true and old,
Set in sunny autumn evenings and an atmosphere of gold,*

*All their finer souls could cherish in their gentle fields about—
And I swear I will pursue them and go somewhat without
The din and fuss and brattle of the restless world of now.
Let them call me queer and dreamy, I will get back somehow,*

*Where I drink in soul the color and I rest me in the rhyme
Of the gold and light and stillness of the happy early time,—
I'll consort with older painters and the early poets choose,
And joy in forgotten glories—though all thundered fame I lose.*

A DAY OF LIFE—TO LETITIA

A morning of vision and dream,
An afternoon of struggle
And dust and grime and bitterness,—
A day of life.

I went to the town on an errand for dad.
'Twas late midsummer, the drouth had been long
But little rains had begun to come.
It was picnic time again.
Folks didn't live at the lakes then.
They went together of a day betimes.
She stood near the porch balustrade
Of her uncle's beautiful home,
All in white, snowy white,
Save where the little pink ribbons
Were pulled through the laces
Like they used to do.
Fairest hair that ever was,
Rippled and floated and lobed most gracefully
On her shoulders below.
Face half classic cut and half
Just pretty American girl,
With eyes of gentlest blue, big and blue,
Gazed restfully as I passed close.
Near behind the little dark evergreens
Banked house and porch.
In front and against her form
The blue larkspur spiked up
And etched her dress most handsomely.
Around and above the thick leaved greenery
Of vine and tree, bending and bowered,
Made coolest shade.
Out beyond the azure northern sky
Smiled all around as only the summer sky
Can smile.
The morning rain was gone, but all about
The grass so green was diamoned with rain drops.
She stood a queen, a radiant maid,
Yet just one of our town girls.
I had known her but little yet,
And still could talk.
A few words said of the day,

A DAY OF LIFE—TO LETITIA—Continued.

And how our town by this time
She did like, some reference to
The church and Sunday School,
And, girl-like, she did tell
Of her pleasant yesterday,
And how the blue waves tossed,
And how the rowing was so fine
On Crystal Lake, and carelessly
Let fall some word—to me a hint
Who did the rowing too.
O it was a picture of summer
And morning, and flowers, and maiden sweet content,
Beautiful, beautiful.

And I went on.
What picture was that I saw?
What dream was it awoke in me?
And straightway taunted me
With a thing impossible all that day.
Soon home, dad said to me
That stony, West-woods field,
For seeding soon,
Rain or no rain, it must be plowed.
And what an afternoon was that!
The blazing sun had dried the earth,
And everywhere it burnt again.
The field was brown,
The dust was yellow everywhere.
The sky was brass above.
There near by Mrs. Hickey's house,
And on the corner by the road,
Where around I swung my team each time,
Her sunflowers flamed as hot almost
As their great patronymic up above,—
Her bed of poppies terrible were,
Like blood spilt in some fearful fight,
Sometimes, O wicked me, I there did see
What I might do some day
To that town dude who rowed that boat.
O the world was brown or red
Or yellow all!
And that old sorrel would hold his bit
And walk just where he pleased.

A DAY OF LIFE—TO LETITIA—Continued.

And I would tug and turn my plow
Far over, the furrow to keep,
Till rasp and thud, a stone it struck,
And out it jumped, and I,
As dad would say,
Another calve's grave big did make.
And I would yank and haul and pull it back,
For dad was terrible on balks.
And that confounded plow,
The beam-bolt always coming loose,
And once I broke a shire,
And for a new trudged from the farthest corner over
To the barn, sweat rolling down,
And face and hands in color like a beet.
And all the time that dream, that morning scene
Haunting me—a thousand arrows shooting
In my bones,— and worst of all,
Some other fellow rowed that boat.
I guessed him well—his dad was rich.
He had a buggy and a horse and I had none.
What chance was there for such a wight as me?
O near I might on Sunday be,
There at the church and Sunday School,
But week days be so far away I must.
And then I'd think of her,
And then I'd look at me,
And at my podgy, niggery hands and clothes,
And at that black and sorrel boney team of mine,
And at that damnable field of stones,
That was my job to plow.
And then I'd call myself a fool,
A fool—a fool— a million times,
To think she'd ever look at me, at such a Dick as me,
And how she would be shocked,
If I should dare to make
Attentions or approach to her,—
Me, fool!
O that was an awful afternoon.

Well, Letitia now is old and gray.
She walks alone,
Orphaned long ago,
And long worn out at teaching school.

A DAY OF LIFE—TO LETITIA—Continued.

And I'm played out—a cripple half.
And whether anything worth while I'll ever do
Is still a question hard.
And still I never get beyond—
It's just the same—
Each day is quite the same—
A morning of vision and dreams,
Of what is beautiful, sweet and so to be desired,
And an afternoon of struggle,
And dust and grime and bitterness—
Plowing stones somewhere about,—
And that is life!

WHY?

Why did girlyies bob their hair?
Not that they would look more fair,
Tho' many pretty fashionings,
To make them look like fairy things,
They've been adopting lately.
'Twas done indeed sedately,—
All thought they'd soon be angelings,
And 'twould get tangled with their wings!

THE AUDIENCE

His ways are sure inscrutable,
Him we can not test,—
And despite the seeming curse of it,
It must be far the best.

God never made a great man yet,
In any clime or age,
But was at hand a crowd of fools,
To laugh him from the stage.

MY PEAR TREE

Long since with the glories of June the blooms were gone.
Darkened, withered and falling one by one
Are the leaves. Still a few yet curled and drooping cling
To the branchlets gray. 'Twould seem but a lonesome thing,
A decrepit thing, a picture of death and fall,

MY PEAR TREE—Continued

Fitting well to the brown and the haze, the bared earth all.
 But see how they hang—luscious to taste and to look—
 Rich burden of age—and little we long for or brook,
 Bereftness of verdure and flowers and Juney perfume,
 When such wealth of fruitage of th' labor of life take room,
 Of spring handsomeness and the colorful girlish gleam.
 Then hail to my pear tree! I study and reason and dream,
 And worthiness all, I declare, and work well done
 Your story. Achievement of harvest and good, not one
 Can they be with th' rosy petals of youth and spring.
 So, my grand old pear tree, hail!—while I muse and sing
 Of your fally appearance and all the desolate sight—
 Redeemed so and fitting by what will soon make right,
 Winter—when we feast and the flowered porcelain
 Russet pears will adorn. Ah, God doth sure ordain
 All things beautiful. Those grand pears would be
 Unbeautiful on a leafy, blossomy, Juney tree.

APPLE BUTTER MAKIN'

It was the big job of the week.
 Ma said she's glad the end to see.
 'Twas Thursday we did apples pick,
 Tet, and Hum, Wawa and me,
 Ooah, Artie, Tamr, Much,—
 And little Eck he played around,
 While we filled bags and pails and such,
 And shook the limbfulls on the ground.

Hum was th' worst, he'd climb a limb,
 And laughin', dance it, 'n give us whacks
 Most anything was fun fer him,—
 With apples bumpin' heads and backs.
 Wawa and Tet a fight did start,
 With rotten apples for the ball,—
 Fore long the rest was takin' part,
 And laughin' soon was spattered all.

Then with 's wagon big comes dad,
 With bags and things he loads it up,—
 For some time now no ride we'd had,
 And so we all piled on the top.

APPLE BUTTER MAKIN'—Continued

And yellin', pommilin', pushin' about,
As we was goin' through the mud,
Then Artie she pushed Tamr out,
An' he went face down in 't k'thud.

Then chores and supper hurried through,
Six bags of Tallman Sweets was brought,—
Fer thicknin' they're the best, you know;
An' we must pare and core them out.
And ma got in some neighbor folks,
An' made some cake fer the parin' bee—
An' say, you ought to heard the jokes,
An' the country farmin' repartee.

Dad said ma's kids 's the ones that had
Kep 'im gittin' eats 'ith all 'is might.
An "Who'd they look like, wh's their dad,
Who give 'em their awful appetite?"
Said ma. Bill Hicks then took 'is turn,
A guying dad how he did see,
Him a bag of bones bring home to burn—
He guessed 't must fer his chickens be.

"I heard 'em rattle, they's dry enough"
Said Bill, an' alls was there they knew,
'T's the horse dad bought. Then spoke Cy Huff,
To Min Hicks, she'd be parin' too,
Fer Jim McKeen 'fore very long,
'Till the babies come so fast that she—
He's always gittin' himself in wrong—
Some kinds of cloth she'd peelin' be.

Min blushed and ma to Jim she said,
"You go wash out your mouth a while."
And so they'd talk—but 'twant so bad
As that of Jim's. Sometimes the style
Was better when the teacher she
Would say nice things with nice words too.
We'd all ears up an' wish 'twould be,
She want so 'fraid an' 'er words so few.

A DAY OF LIFE AND OTHER POEMS

APPLE BUTTER MAKIN'—Continued

An' Tet to ma kep' askin' her
 When the cake we's goin' to get.
 We's all glad he's a pesterer—
 Though the first tub full—'twan't pared yet.
 An' we kep' list'nin' to what's said,
 A gowpin' an' waitin' fer the cake,
 An' fearin' we'd be sent to bed—
 Pertendin' hard how we's awake.

Pert soon ma gave us each a bit,
 A sayin' "Eat it fer till 't's gone;
 You're botherin' the life of me fer it—
 An' nothin' carin' if the work gits done."
 So we eat and gawped some more,
 Hearin' to what the big folks said—
 We's eatin' slow you can be sure—
 We wasn't wantin' to go to bed.

O they wuz talkin' everything,
 Butter 'n eggs 'n calico,
 Er crops and tools and 'lectioning,
 Bad times, 'n the preacher, er wheat to sow.
 But the wordiest was old Bob Sears,
 Wh'd lived 'round there since thirty-two,
 'Bout Indians, wild cats, wolves and bears,
 He's talkin' all the evenin' through.

The worst he told was 'bout a bear
 That came right in t' the house one day
 And picked a little girl up there
 And carried her cross the creek a way—
 And they chased him growlin' late at night,
 Till they got the little girl once more;
 And they made him drop her by a fight,
 And her arm all blood and her dress all tore.

An' you bet we hurried up the stair,
 An' got in bed 's quick 's we could—
 A-thinkin' we saw er heard a bear,
 An' we's sayin' our prayers too mighty good—
 An' pulled the covers on us tight—
 An' stopped our usual gigglings—
 An' then went dreamin' all the night
 Of bears 'n Indians 'n turrible things.

APPLE BUTTER MAKIN'—Continued

Next mornin' heard we by the sound
The cider-mill wuz goin' once more.
We's soon out drivin' the horses 'round,
An' hearn the big nail cylinder roar.
An Tet a stone he shovelled in,
'N dad said, "Haint any eyes in yer head?"
"Yer tearin' the cylinder all to sin."
An' "If yo' can't keep 'em open go back to bed."

An' the cider's runnin' pretty soon,
An' dad filled the big long copper pan
Upon the arch—fer dad by noon
'Ud have apple butter you understan'.
An' what was left in a barrel did run,
An' what tastes best you know 's what's stole—
An' so suckin' with straws we's havin' fun
An' fightin' which should have the hole.

An' dad an' ma they stirrt and stirrt,
An' sure the boilin's smellin' good,
An' we kep' suckin' and ungirt
Our pants band loose out so's we could
Drink more—until both Hum an' Tet
They got a turrible belly ache,
An' soon from both their holes they jet
Cider 's if a flood they'd make.

And cookin' steamin', gittin' browned,
Ma put the spices in and then
We's hangin' pretty close around
Th' sample saucer to lick clean.
An' soon, an' that was fun to see,
By dipper-pails they filled them up,
Each plunk up in a higher key,
A pourin' the crocks up to the top.

Then they tied them with brown paper tight,
An' the whole lot in the buttery stored,
An' ma'd bring a new bowl full each night,
An' put it on the table board.
All day fer "pieces" we came roun',
An' you could tell fer a month from then,
By the way our cheeks wuz plastered brown,
Thet apple butter was made again.

MIN-O-WIS

There spread with farms lies the beautiful Nottawa Prairie,
There by the old St. Joe in the Michigan lakeland.
There for long years stood the Pottawatamie village—
Indian town of the peaceful Nottawa-Sipi,
On the north side the prairie o'erlooking the settler cabins,
Dotting the South. Handsome this land of our fathers,
Mingling of forest and prairie and park-land op'ning,
And wide low meadow and lake and streamlet and river,
Land of flower and bird and beaver and wild deer,
A grass-land, leaf-land, beautiful with verdure of summer,
A gray-white picture land beautiful with snows of winter,—
A paradise land. But black is the hand of the war-god.
Sad are his works upon men, upon women and children.
Men he turns into beasts once made in God's image,
And beasts he makes great to gloat, to drink blood,
Blotting out and destroying the tender and sweet that is in us,
Good-will and kindness and love denying and flouting,
Mistreating and crushing and cruelly doing to death.

Blackhawk of the Sacs the warpath had taken,
Spread like wildfire through prairie and forest the war-call.
Doubted the white man and red man who friends were, who foes were,
Aloof held the whites from the Pottawatamie village.
Lies bred. Rumor grew. The self-seeker, the braggart, the coward
Fanned up the fire of dread, of mistrust and of hatred.
Wonders the red-man and fears for his life and his homestead.
Why the soldiers, the drums, the patrols and the pennants?
For years peace had reigned between white man and red man, and
friendship
And trading had grown 'round the Nottawa fair reservation.
For years the red man had learned to depend on the white man
For food and for clothes, for weapons, his reliance increasing
As went by the seasons—only knew well the red man
How craved the white man his lands and oft schemed to get them.
Days pass and no change and the women and children are starving.
Distance and fear and awful suspicion are growing
That they soon will be driven far from the graves of their fathers.

And this strange, when their young men had gone away to fight Black-
hawk,
And had left them the more bereft of supplies from the hunting.
"Who will go past the sentinels begging bread and explaining,
Who on an inquiring peace-mission will go to the settlers?"

MIN-O-WISS—Continued

All day rang the question throughout the poor Indian village.
Not a warrior moved, for to him 'twould make death seem certain.

Then arose Min-O-Wis, beautiful, a princess among them,
Leads her starving papoose and wends her way o'er the prairie.
Moccasins two prettily hand-wrought and beaded,
Made with her own trembling hands she takes as a present
To give to some settler's wife to whom the sad story—
To some mother-heart—she may tell of their plight and starvation,
Who perchance may have pity and give her to eat for her wee one,
And hoping good will to restore a way may be opened.
Up to the great rough door of a settler's cabin
Coming, she knocks, and begs some words of its mistress.
Away she is ordered in a voice both rough and stentorian,
Voice of one the minion of him the terrible captain,
Who swaggers and brags of the awful day that is coming,
When to earth they will smite or drive far away forever,
Each Nottawa-Sippi hell-hound of a savage.
In vain she pleads and in vain her eyes with tears fill,
In vain she offers the moccasins handsomely beaded
And tiny-made to fit the papoose of the white man.
In vain down she throws them, wringing her hands and outcrying,
"Keep, no good to poor squaw if some bread they won't buy her."
"Cursed she-spy, interloper and cheat and liar,
Away from my door or on that big oak I will hang you."
These words from within for her bravery, her pleading, her presents.
Intrepid man, on his brow be placed what fine laurels.
What valor he gained so to drive away that poor mother.
"Hang me up, white man, and not will be Min-O-Wis hearing
Cry for bread her papoose and see it die of starvation."
With these words away with her heart all mangled and broken
And weeping, slowly she finds her way back to their village.
O you brute and coward of man who denied and abused her,
How many black wars and all their black hell that followed,
Might have been stopped if some bullying, braggarty chieftain
Would listen to some kindly soul who came intervening.
Hard-hearted and boaster, and cruel, your hell shall be triple,
When of this dark world the stories are told right in heaven.
O Min-O-Wis surely that day had been perfect peacemaker,
And the wound of a Min-O-Wis many can heal only in heaven,
As only heaven can atone for the crucified Jesus.

And now the great captain convoked his valiant militia.

MIN-O-WISS—Continued

Pompous the council and the speeches solemn and many.
The lukewarm were urged, the cold were reproved and berated,
And decision was made that a stockade must quickly be builded,
That children and wife might be housed from the blood-thirsty savage
That now was painting and arming and starting his war dance,
And soon like the wind would sweep o'er the fair-flowered prairie
To scalp and murder and take them all off in a moment.
So up went its corners in haste and Fort Hogan was building.
Near two days they toiled, hurraing and boasting and dreaming
Of heroic great deeds and big names gone down into history,
For all they had done and would do on the battle-field coming.
But not all were braggarts and cowards at building Fort Hogan.
There is always at hand a man of good sense and discretion,
If poltroons can still their clamors a moment and hear him.
One Cyrus Shellhouse, noble man, peace be to his ashes,
The whole farce decried often had and willingly offered
To go as peace man to the Nottawa Indian village
And bring Cush-ee-Wiss the true chief to meet the great captain,
The marshal of hosts and the lordly king of Fort Hogan.
'Twas hard to turn him aside from his great preparations,
And interfere with his visions of glory soon coming.
With reluctance, consent at last he gave to the mission,
And Shellhouse alone went quickly over the prairie,
And straight to the dignified chief in his wigwam.
Not easy to persuade found he the foreboding warrior,
Destitute, starving and fearing attack from the white man.
But the Cush-ee-Wiss said "Let you pale chief invite me to council,
And go we will to the door of his stockade and meet him."
No man was Cy Shellhouse to let a hard thing defeat him,
The thing was arranged for in less than twice sixty minutes.
Himself became escort to Cush-ee-Wiss and his two compeers.
The prairie they cross, while there the redoubtable captain
Nervously paces before the door of his stockade.
His plume nods, his eye shoots, with his tramp his scabbard goes
rattling.
Up comes Cush-ee-Wiss, firm in step and noble in bearing,
Both kindness and doubt in his face, but no sign of his flinching,
Gives his hand to the captain all friendly and retires a few paces,
With thumbs hooked in belt stands there facing the mighty commander,
Easy his grace contrasted with that of the figity captain,
Silent he stands awaiting the word of his master.
Minutes pass by and no voice has this dumb-stricken chieftain.
Then slowly speaks Cush-ee-Wiss, saying "What wishes the white man?"

MIN-O-WISS—Continued

Let speak the pale face, he has called his red brother to meet him.”
“We are wanting to know,” returns the great innocent captain,
What we have done that you now are our enemies joining,
And will massacre us and scalp us all with our children.”
“Not does the pale face speak words of wisdom and fairness,”
Returned Cush-ee-Wiss; “or not were he such question asking;
For the red man can say when the white man came to our prairie,
The honey-comb tree we showed him, and haunt of the wild deer;
We showed him the otter slide and the wild fowl’s nesting.
The white man our deer killed or drove them far away from us,
Our honey he stole, of the fur of our otter he robbed us,
The wild fowl he scared from our waters—the red man was starving,
His squaws and papooses had nothing to eat in the wigwam.
The red man asked bread and the white man fire-water gave him,
Till our warriors grew weak and trembled like women and children,
And now with no strength and no arms and no voice to shout with,
With no breath for the war-whoop, we are called to meet here the
pale face,
Where he beats loud his drum and calls his strong men together,
To drive Pottawatmie away from his loved reservation,
To send us vagabonds far from the graves of our fathers.
We wished no war with the white man, we are weak, he strong is,
We are few, he is many, why does he plot so against us?
Not does the pale face speak words of wisdom and fairness.”
Stunned, the great captain hardly found words for replying,
When he saw how the Indian looked on his war preparations.
Answering again, inquires the great innocent captain,
“Did you not receive runners from Blackhawk and arm for our kill-
ing?”
“Not does the pale face speak words of wisdom and fairness,”
Returned Cush-ee-Wiss, and continued, “We are weak, you strong are.
Pottawatamie and Sac were a long time enemies mortal.
Many wars were between us, and never was the tomahawk buried.
Pottawatamie hates Sac as the eagle the filthy raven.
We hoped many scalps of the Sac would take our white brother.
We can follow the warpath and make a straight trail, and our young
men
Have gone to make war on the Sac, our enemy, the lying,—
’Tis a moon since they went with Captain Hatch to Chicago.
We thought if the Sac would come to our Nottawa-Sipi
And sound the war cry over there among our poor wigwams,
The white brother would help us, and as one we would go out against
him.

MIN-O-WISS—Continued

Foolish were we. For when saw our brother the pale face,
How our strong young warriors had gone to fight with the white chief,
And how we weak were, he straightway prepares war against us.
Then we feared Sac far away and the pale face here by us,
Our men fled afar and our women and children are starving.
Not does the pale face speak words of wisdom and fairness.
The red man would be the comrade and friend of the white man.
To his cabin would fly for help and shelter in danger,
But the white man forbade and raised the hatchet against us.
What else could we think when home came our Min-O-Wis crying?
Let the pale face speak. Has he aught to tell his red brother?"
Truth out, from all throats a shout of relief now arises.
There is friendship once more and good will on the Nottawa prairie.
Crestfallen, abashed and undone retires the great captain—
His glory all gone and a farce all his fussing and bluster.
Wise advice he denied and went on with his drilling and warring—
Now his cowardly crowd are the first to gibe and berate him.
His name we withhold for the sake of descendants now living—
They may honor a name that once was laughed and poo-pooed at.
Let him with his ilk await their final rewarding.
Soldiers two kinds have trod earth in its white-black story:
Those of war for war's sake in whose wake is but ashes and curses,—
Those of peace raised by God to destroy the world scourgers.
If the first had not come with shut ears and blind eyes and blood
seeking,
The second need never have suffered for that monster's outpurging.
This is the story of Min-O-Wis, Cush-ee-wiss and Fort Hogan
Enacted long since on the beautiful Nottawa Prairie.
Good to hear that we wiser may be in the unspoiled future.
For black is the hand of war and sad are its fruits all
To man and to child and to mother. Our fathers are sleeping,
But we must make better this world and so safeguard our children,
That no place shall be found for the braggart, the poltroon, the bully,
To build Fort Hogans and dupe a great crowd of minions,
To make war for war's sake and plunder the earth for his gloating,
Causing many a Min-O-Wis and her children to suffer.
Let the world court be made and stand unchallenged forever,
Let the Shellhouse ever come there and unbare what the truth is,
Let the Cush-ee-wiss ever come there and tell a right story.

THE BROOKLET

The brooklet runs to the river,
And the river runs to the sea.
So all the thought of my restless life,
My violet runs to thee.

And a bird from the old bridge willow
Sings sweetly on to me;
But he only makes me think the more,
My sweetheart love of thee.

THIS LOVE OF MINE

This love of mine—how old it seems,
And it won't grow less in my thought and dreams,
As the heavy years roll by.
O girl I love, if you only knew,
How I weary and wait and long for you,
So lone ought not be I.

A WINTER SKETCH

A break, yes, a break, on its stiffness and coldness,
Will heaven be when it comes on earth with a shout,—
A triumph shout and the old thing rolls up like a scroll.
The snow was all over the campus three snowstorms deep.
The bread-man with horse and wagon and heavy load
Was stuck in the snow there by the library door.
Theological students with heads held high were passing,
Remarking and laughing and guying, but never once thinking,
Of the breadman's real plight and his horse that was pulling and
pulling.
Then came a fellow, himself a break on the style
Of the average theologian, brought up on a farm
Somewhere in Ohio. He looked but once at the bread-man.
He stepped in the snow, he grabbed a spoke and said,
"Get up!" to the nag, as he whirled the wheel; and the bread-man
Was gone on his way to do the real work of the world.
O I was glad for that whiff of something still left,
On a farm in Ohio, of the America that once was,
And the gleam of the stroke that one day will smash the old hulk,
And I said, God bless that fellow's preaching forever.

THE WINTER SPIRIT

There's a spirit in the winter,
'The white, gray, airy winter,
The home-keeping-us glad winter,
 A rare old minstrel sprite.
Farm-yard and cellar show it,
Red cheeks of love well know it,
And the brisky winds they blow it,
That he's here.
Rare his reign is and his cheer,
 Fills the life full day and night.

WHEN THE WINTER WINDS

When the winter winds are blowing,
And the snow is everywhere,
And the cold house parts seem colder,
Than 'tis in the open air,

Then the kiddies all come round me,
In the room where burns the fire,
Play or study, scrap or prattle,—
Of doing something never tire.

All the evening we're together,
In one cozy chamber sit,
And I'm glad how freezing winter
Brings the social joy of it.

In the summer they are scattered,
Round the house and yard and street;
Running here and there like kiddies,
Where some curious thing they meet.

So I like the chill and rigor,
Like the dark and snow and ice,
For it makes where we are living,
House and home seem doubly nice.

There's a glow, a joy, a something,
In each stir and look and sound,
Wakes you up for fun and dreaming,
Where the young life beats around.

WHEN THE WINTRY WINDS—Continued

Ho the winter—sure it made was
To show off the kiddies' best.
Then like oases in the desert
Is a home with kiddies blest.

Often then the fairies whisper,
Prettiest things for me to sing,
Things that warm and balmy summer
Somehow don't know how to bring.

LETITIA YOUNG, LETITIA FAIR

Letitia young, Letitia fair,
Letitia of the flaxen hair,
Letitia lithe, Letitia neat,
Letitia blossomy, pink and sweet,
Nymph from the sea for me to love,
Angel flown here from above,—
All of both and a million more
Of lovely creatures, I adore
In my Letitia—scarce fifteen—
Handsomest girl that e'er was seen—
Girl, just girl, and a parcel sweet,
That to get a glimpse of, see or meet,
I dream by night and I plan by day,
It's never too hard, only—what the way.
And just to look in those big blue eyes,
All I could want to makes arise
All the dare and the fight there is in me.
And if I the happy lad might be,
Those lips of the graceful arch to kiss—
And add to all that I've told of bliss,
With this my aching, empty arm,
To clasp and hold that beauteous form,—
O it's paradise I'm challenged for,
And the world for' me wakes up to war.
The old life seems of little worth,
There's something fearful in heaven and earth,
Fearfully beautiful, fearfully good
That I may have. And it's understood
That failure—black is the article death,
I will sign and seal with my latest breath,

LETITIA YOUNG, LETITIA FAIR—Continued

While striving to win of my queen adored
 Acceptance of my heart outpoured;
 But not so black as the awful cost,
 On to live and my heaven lost.
 Letitia young, Letitia fair,
 Letitia of the flaxen hair,
 Letitia lithe, Letitia neat,
 Letitia blossomy pink and sweet,
 I pray you don't a votary take,
 Till once to you my plea I make!

LETTY AND THE BINDING

"Oh but it's hot and my shirt is wet,
 And the day is long from ended yet.
 The stubbles scratch my arm and wrist,
 My thumb is sore, but I must persist
 To hug each bundle and tuck each band,
 At binding oats make a full farm hand,
 All this burning August day.

O always dad his oats must sow
 Behind the woods in a hollow low,
 On his last new ground and a sweatter hole,
 Each summer we get by a certain rule,—
 And great big oats 'mong the stumps to bind
 On this old farm you will never find,
 When I get to have my way."

Bluff talk, for his mind is but half there.
 Dreams keep filling the summer air.
 Tawny and yellow the oats and bright
 The sun and summer gleam on the sight,—
 And how pretty she'll look in her father's pew,
 All white and pink from his seat to view,
 And Sunday is coming soon.

O flowers and ribbons and hat and smile—
 Dreams of Letty how they beguile,
 The hours away of the long hot day—
 Letty and Sunday and church—ah, say,
 If you've never bound oats and tugged and sweat,
 And dreamed how you'd clasp an angel yet,
 You've missed one rarest boon.

LETTY AND THE WOOD HAULING

"I tell you it's tough on a fellow like me,
Son of a real dirt farmer, you see,
And about the bashfullest Dick that could be,

And Letty she lives in the jail-house there,
Old Clay County sheriff's her dad—and for fair
That girl's got me. O I wouldn't care

For all this wood-hauling dad makes me do,
This snowy and freezy long winter through,
Loads and loads from his clearing new;

But to Letty's dad he has sold it all,
And gee, I wish through the earth I could fall,
Right back of her house every bit I must haul.

And you bet I unload and rank it up quick,
And get my sled out of there so slick,
And never once look tor'd the windows and brick

Where Letty lives. Suppose I'm a fool,
And twixt pride and devil I'm only a tool,
And ought to be sent to the weak-mind school.

O I'm never afraid of the work or the cold,
Or to haul any stuff when dad gets it sold,
Really 'mong horses and sleighs I am bold.

But I tell you it's tough on a fellow like me,
My head all so bewitched by Letty, you see,
And her dad's wood-hauler to have to be.

LETTY'S CHURCH

That church, it makes my heart go thump,
Whenever I come this way,
At sight o' it my feelin's jump—
That brown old buildin', say,
What makes it get me in a scare?
Because my Letty she goes there,
My peach blossom Letty.

LETTY'S CHURCH—Continued

I got to be there at the door,
 And ask to see her home,
 Terrible—got to do it sure—
 O I'll be tremblin' some—
 Got to do it on Sunday night—
 Gee, it'll kill me out o' sight.
 My destroyin' angel, Letty.

An' I got to be there—'at's the worst,
 Before another feller,
 An' do it quick, an' do it first—
 O I'll turn yellor!
 But I'm goin' to go 'n do't er die,
 'Taint worth livin', that's why,
 Without my glorious Letty.

O that old church and this me, dunce,
 Wish we weren't—either,
 An' unless this thing gets settled once,
 I won't be, neither—
 I'll hunt a deep hole—O my sweet,
 My heaven or my hell complete—
 It's all you, Letty!

 LETTY DESPAIRS

The winter wind in the elm doth sigh,
 In the spirit of one gone mad,
 The snow falls cold and the world is chill,
 And the heart in me is sad.
 At the church door there till they all were gone,
 I waited again—you left me alone,
 And I was hurt and ashamed.

Now rough was the storm, now clear was the blue,
 And sometimes it seemed would be spring.
 At the Sunday School time I was looking for you,
 I thought you would help us sing.
 But so strangely you acted and ran away,
 And you kept you from me the enduring day,
 If I'm angry—am I to be blamed?

LETTY DESPAIRS—Continued

Do you think alone I will walk in the cold,
When Tom is friendly and kind?
“Dumb Tom” you called him tonight brought me home
And so wintry seemed not the wind.
You’re bashful and proud, but the worst is you’re mean,
You’re the boobiest boob that ever was seen;
On my feelings enough you have maimed!

LETTY, I LOVE YOU

“Letty I love you!” all day today
In anguish I to myself did say.
For this morning as if disdainful, I
Passed you without speaking by.
And my how I wanted to talk to you,
And some nice things had to say to you, too.

But I had no tongue and my legs they bent,
And out in a hurry, poor fool, I went,
Afraid I’d show how bashful was I,
And the words might stick in my throat if I’d try.
O Letty, I’m having an awful time,
And I hope some day you’ll see this rhyme,

And the honest truth about things will know,—
Why like a mean devil I acted so,
How I cried like a child when I got alone,
How I felt me as if forever undone—
And how “Letty, I love you!” the enduring day,
A million times to myself I did say.

ELECTED

Hey there, saint, why complain?
There’s no sainthood in luxury, ease,
In plenty to eat and do as you please,
Do you want to come back to us again?

Some hill you would climb, something more
Than common folks you chose to be.
Why growl like the mediocrity?
What, indeed, were you elected for?

IT MAKES A DIFFERENCE

"Come heah yo' rascal,
 Fightin' agin?
 You' ma's 'shamed o' yo'—
 S' full o' sin."

"Ma, I'se punch 'im—
 He said 'tus yo'
 'S th' homeliest ole thing
 On ouah avenu'."

"Hole 'im, Jimmy,
 Till I git theah—
 Now I'se got 'im,—
 Baste 'im for faiah."

 CALF PHILOSOPHY

Watch 'im.
 Naw he's learnin' to drink,
 Er thinks he is.
 I gave 'im a half o' pail,
 An' he chucks his head
 Clean in to his eyes.
 Then when his nose
 An' lungs is full,
 He snorts the milk out,
 An' bobs around
 Crazy awhile.
 Then in agin
 With most o' his head.
 He'll die yit—
 Chokin'.

 They's sum animals
 That eats off'n plates
 'S died mor'n once
 'Cause they couldn't git enough.

 IF HE STRUGGLED

O God if he never shall reach,
 The mountain-top, glorious, high,
 If obscurity, nothingness, each
 Man says was the end of his try,
 O God, he is one with the heroes that died.
 He breathed mountain air, faced a wonderful sky.
 He struggled in glory—they lied!

A FUNERAL IN WINTER

Bitter cold the day—
Leaden the sky and blue was all the world.
With mattock and with ax
We chopped through ice and frozen earth,
In mittens, with coats on,
We shoveled out the shaft.
Soon hard the exhumed earth,
And firm the very sides with frost.
O it was cold!

There in the hillside graveyard old
The yellow grasses, wirey, long,
Peering, stringing through the deep iced snow—
Unkempt old place,
There we made his grave and buried him today.
The little brook close by was mute,
Hidden 'neath the frigid work
Of three fell winter storms,
And days and nights and days and nights so cold.
He laughed and glinted not his wonted way.
He too was dead.
The world was dead.
E'en the snow-birds had deserted all
The bushy little trees about.
Except that bird of winter cawed on high,
Or walked and trailed his wings upon the crust,
And save the thud and rattle of our tools
There was no sound nor stir the world around.
There by withered weed and untrimmed shrub,
And crosses, columns, urns,
All broken and in disarray,
Stones all so blue and hard and cold,—
They fitted well the day and time,—
There we buried him.
There in the kind of dead-man, poor-man wilderness,
Sure death and day and place were one,
With a funeral winter.

Came the little procession on—
Through the tangle and the drift.
The bearers stumbled and tugged their way,
The parson read but half the service through.
A woman in black dress and crepe,
With weeping children three,
Was hurried soon away.

A FUNERAL IN WINTER—*Continued*

We tumbled in the frozen clods,
We roughly built the mound,
The few flowers laid thereon;
Soon they were frozen crispy stiff.
A bitter day—a winter day,—
A working man in middle life,
The black, white plague,
A home all fatherless and moneyless,
The story of this bitter winter day.
Where pine and willow edged the hill,
And marked their forms upon the sky,
With tools on shoulder and saying never a word,
We turned our faces home.

O death and a day like this—
O death and a home like that tonight,
What says reason, human wit,
Or optimism trumped up high
Unto a day like this?
O let them prate of all their schemes,
Reducing God to man,
And poohing at old men and times,
What can—who can for me,
Stand against a day like this?
Who can but God and God alone?
Who against this end of life,
The sadness, sin and death,
The gloom, the chill the night
Of this dark winter day?
Only He who did, who could,
Conquer death for me.
Only God who bared his arm,
One other dark and wintry day,
Upon a cross upon a hill,
Himself met death, yes died,
My God met death and died—
Earth's bitterest, darkest winter day,
Yet what a light, O what a light
Comes from it unto me!

ALWAYS SPRING

O the spell and the gleam,
And the airy dream,
When the winter turns,
And a boy's heart yearns
For the gladsome days of Spring!

The long night done,
Bright beams the sun.
On high again
He leads his train.
The damp and dust when the year was old
Turned all his light to orange and gold.
But now by the frosty wind that blew,
All swept and cleaned and garnished new,
So blue, so blue, the sky so blue,
Makes him flood with silver rain
The world again;
And all anew hope 'wakening,
A fellow can not help but sing.

A first bird trills in the hollow there
A sweetheart air,—
And like the sun he prophesies
Of love and flowers and summer skies.
And free and glad,
As if he had
Broke from his prison dark and long,
Sparkles and leaps and sings his song,
The brook, my little brook,
Full and gay at every nook,
So bright in the sun
Like he diamond-jeweled wings had won.

A dark crow caws
From the bare tree top,
Upon the hill where the winds won't stop,
And cold with winter blow.
He belongs to the old world dead and froze,
Let him croak his cry and go.
In his pride and his empty raillery,
He can only be
A foil to the better world we know.

ALWAYS SPRING—Continued

O the earth is all so full of light,
How the birches look so shiny white.
In the early darker winter time,
When the sun stopped low in his daily climb,
And clouds oft took his place on high,
Dim was the world and trees and sky.
But now the tree-forms light or dark,
Gleam or make a sketchy mark
Against the blue.
And what seemed to December true—
Dead leaves a-hanging to each limb,—
Such out-of-placeness now they seem.
So fall away, no longer cling,
You rags begone—the birds are come,
No longer we'll be drearishome,
We sing for Spring.

Now many things the warming day,
And thought of summer on the way,
Stir the elders up to do—
Or to get ready or put thru—
And where is work that must be done,
Here a farm boy finds his fun.
Go, then, James, jump in, hurray!
'Tis life and poetry every day.

In th' sugar bush we boil the sap.
Now lay aside the mits and cap.
Wear a hat.
Loose your cravat.
The syrup fine
Or a sugar lump who would decline?
Now away to the mill we haul the logs,
Ring those pigs—they'll soon be hogs.
Put in the barn that stack of hay,
Pile the old bob-sled away.
And plan the garden and the fields—
Paper farming—fun it yields.
Look up the catalogs for seed,
Study the pictures, something read,
Of the new things and the tools you need,
But of fooling money away, take heed.

ALWAYS SPRING—*Continued*

Now the buried apples dig with haste,
So good and fresh they're going to taste.
And the cabbage and the root things all
We put so snug in the hole last fall;
Now tender and sweet—O the luxury,
Boiled dinners now for you and me.
Now plump are the hens. Of the eggs they lay,
They cackle and sing the live-long day.
The new calves bleat.
Now get your winter work complete,
Store away the new smoked meat,
Make the soap both strong and good,
Cut and pile next winter's wood;
Shell the seeds, haul out manure,
Make the fences firm and sure,
Oil the harness, fix the plow,
Soon we'll go a-planting now.

And whether boy or man you see,
You keep singing happily.
For this is poetry for sure,
And the kind that will endure.
Dream as a youth,
The gayest truth,
Your dreams will fade away.
But when comes on your manhood day,
Put in your hand and work with things.
Then ever rings
On, on the song,
Your way along!
Toil then for wife and child and home,
Unrestfully no more you'll roam—
For house and comforts, things to eat,
Your tasks again and again repeat.
You work for them, do all your share,
Manage and tend and plan with care.
No sourness comes as life goes past,
That th' airiness of youth don't last.

ALWAYS SPRING—Continued

Plunge in and live life to the full—
God made the rule—
And songs all new and sweet and fine,
More restful, peace-like and divine,
You'll sing,—
And it's always Spring!

WHEN THE PORKERS GRUNT

When the porkers grunt and the cows moo
It all sounds good—
And the hens go squawking the yards through,
And the horses whinney and stamp too,
O it all sounds good.
But most of all—'tis understood—
When a new-born bellerin' calf has come,
Then it sounds the most like th' old farm home!

PRAIRIE CHICKENS IN MINNESOTA

O have you heard the chickens humming
On a May morning, summer coming,
And have you stood there still,
And listened to that wondrous ringing,
That strange ventriloquistic singing,
You placed not, you traced not,
For it came from every hill?
O here in our wide land, bright in the morning,
Still and sweet, I have heard Gabriel's warning.
Of a wonderful glory of music abounding,
Dropt out of heaven, our sky-land resounding,
My soul hath felt the thrill.

RETURN (NORTH JERSEY)

The pines peak up in the beautiful blue,
The purple clouds hang over,
The scraggy oaks spread out below,
Where the eagles soar and hover.

We are coming back to our mountain land,
The April winds are blowing,
Our voyage afar is at its end,
And home to love we're going.

Faint glints of green are peering forth,
The crocuses are gleaming,
On fenced field and gray old earth,
More loved than ever seeming.

Soon lips we'll kiss so sweet and fair,
Soon welcome cheers be ringing,—
God hangs his pictures everywhere,
And the world is full of singing.

LETTY, WAIT

I'm not the one for you to get,
By running with another,—
And Letty, if you care a bit,
Don't go that way to bother.

Cho.—O I'll get right in time, my sweet,
And court you yet so gaily—
Though as a boob I can't be beat,
My love gets bigger daily.

The winter winds are blowing long,
The Spring comes on so slowly,
It's icy rough with no bird song,
But O I love you truly.—Cho.

Yes, I was bashful, such a boob,
And still I passed you proudly,—
But terrible to me the rub,
And home, I wept me loudly.—Cho.

LETITIA WAIT—*Continued*

O Letty, won't you wait a bit,—
 With pinky blossoms blooming,
 And Spring, I will my gumption get,
 Love's time to dare is coming.

Cho.—Sure I'll get right in time my sweet,
 And court you then so gaily,
 Though as a boob I can't be beat,
 Love gets more desp'rate daily.

LETITIA

I saw her again today, sweet girl,
 And I talked with her just a bit.
 The world turns round and the years roll by,
 And what is the meaning of it.
 But I know a sweet story that must be told,
 So sweet and so true it can never grow old,
 And its meaning is infinite.

I looked into the gentlest eyes today,
 That e'er glinted 'neath a curl—
 Ah Letitia fair, I give up to the truth,
 I love you, of my loves the pearl.
 And back I come from the years long and strange,
 Filled with visions and learning and struggle and change,
 To you, just the same sweet girl.

Yes wondrous the truth, but the lesson was long,
 And so slow learning it was I—
 O why so disjointed and ill set this world,—
 A soul sad and humble asks, why?
 Guess I right, you have waited, of me kindly thought,
 While I've wandered and wondered, all but to be taught
 That never can true love die?

LETITIA'S COMPLAINT

You might have loved me all these years.
Then not all more and more had grown,
Two lives so empty, sad and lone,
Until today I sit in tears,
So dark the dark thought now appears,
You might have loved me all these years.

You might have loved me all these years.
Why turned you from the gift of youth?
Why spurned you Heaven's sweetest truth,
For bootless wanderings, doubts and fears,
With lack of all that life endears?
You might have loved me all these years.

You might have loved me all these years.
Then I full womanhood had known,
Then I more lovable had grown,
And not as swift its end youth nears,
But wait stern work and cold world jeers.
You might have loved me all these years.

THE WHITE CAPTIVE

Graceful lady, form divine,
Bewitching rightness of stature thine,
American girl.

Dainty, perfect hands and feet,
Delight to see, exquisitely neat.
American girl.

Arms and legs of Thorwaldsen,
Celestial like, I see again.
American girl.

And pretty, pretty little neck,
Could the Venus of Milo shoulders deck.
American girl.

And head and face and hair so free,
My sister, sweetheart, here I see,
American girl.

THE WHITE CAPTIVE—*Continued*

And brow and nose, and lips and chin—
O here to worship I begin,
American girl.

Fineness, gem-like, sweet, our own,
This beauty, in Europe never known,
American girl.

And standing firm in self-esteem,
Yet gentle, of rancor never a gleam,
American girl.

With eyes of earnestness and truth,
Aspiring, yearning, loving youth,
American girl.

Appealing, girlish, O to be
Your hero-man, to set you free,
American girl.

Ah, what's American to me, dear,
And all my boyhood loves are here,
American girl.

*Erastus Palmer's statue in the Metropolitan Museum.

WORLDLINGS

In a little while they will be weary,
In a little while from pride will cease,
In a little while for sin be sorry,
And they will so long for peace.

In a little while the frame will crumble,
In a little while the wealth be gone,
In a little while the mind will stumble,
On their day will set the sun.

In a little while their souls be broken,
In a little while their bodies die,
O what if God what's left hath taken,—
Sweet and humble to the sky.

NOT SO BAD

"Whose kid are you?" said I to her.
"Whose kid am I? I'm your kid, sir."
"I own no homely kid like you."
"You are my daddy and you do."
"How know you I your daddy be?"
"Sometimes you money give to me—
Ten cents today, ten yesterday—"
She said it such a cunning way—
"Who are you if you aint my dad?"
So—well—you see—I'm not so bad!

A SPRING LAMENT (THE CHURCH)

'Tis Cleaning time, and all the wives
Are busy as can be,
And every house is upside down,
A misery to see.
But th' old church on the corner there
Is the very place that we
Never do a thing about
But just talk most awfulee.

We paint and paper, scrub and trim,
And celebrate the spring,
And we're most mighty careful
For every little thing
About our houses,—fuss and fume,
And "jaw" instead of sing,
But about the church and how it looks,
We just don't care a "ding."

The door is broke, the walls are peeled,
The color's mostly brown,
The weeds so big they can't stand up,—
'Tis the eyesore of the town—
The churchyard. And one gets to feel
That religion's mostly down,
With the folks pretending worship there,
What few there are aroun'.

A SPRING LAMENT (THE CHURCH)—*Continued*

We all so proud and grabbing are,
To get more propertee,
And fix it up, and swell and show
How rich and smart are we;—
But the muss-hole that we call the church,
It indicates to me,
Our next-world house that we will get,
How shabby it will be.

WHERE THE LANE BEGINS

I love my lane and the pasture bars,
And the winding cowpath there,
And e'en the hoof prints in the sag
Help make my picture fair.

And the old gray stump and sticks around,
And the muddied rail that lies
Along the way, are the homely things
That for my sketch I prize.

And the thistle prim against the fence,
And the woolly mullein stalk—
Save these the verdure is close cropped,
And it's pleasant there to walk.

And my chickens, white and gray and red,
Are scattered all along
Barnyard and lane and clover lot—
They help to make my song.

I love them so. And my white winged doves,
They fly and glint about,
Where near my porker one doth graze,
Or my three cows farther out.

And the sky is blue and the fields are green,
And summer is in the land,
And here where the barnyard joins my lane,
I love to take my stand.

And rest a bit as the evening comes,
And marvel at my scene,
How worth and use and peace are joined,
With beauty's perfect mein.

WHEN MOTHER SANG

When mother sang some girlhood song,
Forgetting her care and heartaches and wrong,
And the bitter struggle of all those years,
Rearing us nine in her toil and tears,
O it was wonderful. For we cared,—
We children only, and with her shared
In all her grief, far more than she knew.
For the sorrow world that she went through,
Though something we couldn't understand
Was awful to us, and pointed beyond
To the great dread world of grief and pain.
But that we should ever in it remain,—
O surely no, and God and good,
Our little hearts saw and understood.
And so glad we were, we'd cry sometimes
When mother sang—for the very chimes
Of heaven we heard in her beautiful voice.
And O how for a little we would rejoice,
And wish so hard that always we
Might hear mother sing and so happy be.

THEN AND NOW

“The rose is red and the violet blue,
Honey is sweet and so are you.”
So we sang in the morning dew,
In the days of the district school,
In the days of pinks and hollyhocks,
Of the aster, straw-flower and red flox,
That mother grew by the front-yard walks,
Up and down by the old-time rule.

The daisies ever bow at our feet,
But Jersey meadows are just as sweet,
And for love and poetry just as meet,
As the flowers of the morning song.
And if flowers and poetry leave my life,
If beauty fades out in the manhood strife,
Since mother is gone and “she” is a wife,
With me, with me is the wrong.

JELLY MAKING

When she went to pick the currants off, long, long ago,
In summer time and berry time, when daddy went to mow,
Sunbonnet on and apron big to the long bush row,
At the lower side the orchard, in the morning cool you know,

Then we'd follow on and play around, we youngsterlings three—
Baby Tim, the curly head, and Billy-Buck and me,
For our red-cheeked mother was, a-bending on her knee,
'Mid bushes green and clusters red a picture fine to see.

When back to house with basket full the jelly red to make,
Then for look of squeeze and smell of pot, but most of all for sake
Of frothy skimmings warm and sweet and th' kettle soon to take
And scrape with spoon and lick so clean, sure we kept wide awake,

When mother did the currants up, long, long ago,
And put the handsome cups away row upon row,¹
But only to eat when folks were sick as with chills and "aig-yoo—" ²
And didn't that healthy Billy Buck often get sick though!

MY PRAYER

O God I've been in earnest,
I believe I've been in earnest.
I have been mistaken, blundered,
Sinned in haste and passion.
But my God I've been in earnest,
And little have I trifled.
I have worked, and worked, and worked,
Maybe I never will find myself,
And must seek and still grope on.
But O my God, in tears,
I do aver I've tried, I've been in earnest.
And if one day I do arrive
At that better land of rest,
O God one black thing may I forget,
May I forever, forever forget,
One picture I've seen oft,
Picture of torture and hell to me,
Picture of not one thing else,
But what brought me bitterness,
Bitterness in my soul,—
Picture of a bunch of boys,
Or men laughing at me
When I was in earnest.

TO MY FELLOW POETS

Make it beautiful, let it ring,
Your joy to all the world impart.
Make it true and let it sing,
Its way into each heart.

Write so a struggling world will heed,
For lives all hard and lone and dry,
O, write it plain so all may read,
As they go hurrying by.

For tired folks will not stop to spell,
Or hidden thought with toil dig out.
And love will always quickly tell,
What he is glad about.

Yes, write it simple, sweet, and plain,
As bards did in the days of old.
Again they'll love our every strain,
And prize us more than gold.

MOTHER'S OLD STUFF

No—nobody wants it in his home,
“Mother's old stuff”—at auction it must not be sold,
Lest somebody's pride should be hurt—“mother's old stuff”—
For a summer cottage by the lake it would do,
And that the disposal voted. But one stood aside—
Of mansion's of glory to him it furniture was—
That odd one—always a slant of dreams in his head.
“Nuts” they called him, they who themselves worship shucks.
And he remembered far away back in the years,
When mother with father toiled and waited and saved
On the little farm there by the school near the creek—
How each little piece was added, with glow of triumph and joy,
“Mother's old stuff.” That little bureau first—
They let “Nuts” have it, and he packed the drawers up full
Of pictures that origins and bringings-up might betray
To dancing card-party folks—“Mother's old stuff”—
Framed and prized and hung by her beautiful hands,
Down through the years—quaint old Scotch and Dutch—
How from heaven they look and see where the trash is today!

MOTHER'S OLD STUFF—*Continued*

Beautiful bureau that on carpet of rag,
By bedstead of wood painted blue, roped and straw-ticked—
How its mahogany shone above all in the house,—
And wonderful place that embroidered treasures contained
Oldest and choicest to her of "mother's old stuff."
On it stood the old clock with its mystery works,
And its wonderful gong, big and square and plain,
And its pictured door, our study through childhood days.
'Twas medicine cabinet too, rare bottles within,
Wherewith her hand our achings oft allayed.
Fine old thing of the home, that she wound up each night,
Forgotten, dust-covered and broke in the attic it lay—
"Nuts" tore off the door, the most he could take.
And in th' dining room near, the old lounge, a luxury once—
They gave it away to some poor—"mother's old stuff."
And chromos hung 'round, a gallery of art they had made,
The best that a loving heart could place in her home—
They'll go to the fire heap soon, "mother's old stuff."
There was still the old table with leaves and a red table-spread,
Whence we ate—ah things forever gone out of the world—
Paradise things prepared by a goddess's hands,
Skillful for cherubs—O wonderful mother's hands!
And hard by in the kitchen, the old sink-cupboard stood,
Banished to basement now—'twill kindling wood make.
What immaculate dishes and knives and forks and spoons,
Above and below it contained—"mother's old stuff."
Shoved aside in a room the "center table" now stands,
Marble topped, a glory thing of our childhood time.
What a prize 'twas to mother when dad brought it home one day,
With a "store" carpet too—why we dreamed of kings and courts,
And knights and ladies, and palaces great and grand,
And on tiptoe stole in for a look. And there she placed
The family Bible with marker of silk hanging out—
And so proud was dear mother that she had a parlor too.
And topmost notch of the pride and wealth of those days
That tall reed organ—there the J——s had arrived—
An organ in house. How neat she kept it and how
Glad she and father would sit and hear us all sing,
When the musical sister played, and we concerts held
Around that old reed organ, pride of the house,
Back in those old home days when we all could sing.
O saddest of breaks, for those days of singing are gone—
Singing for her when she rested from her work—

MOTHER'S OLD STUFF—*Continued*

O that they could be again, but forever they're gone,
Forever—now pride of getting, 'tis, rules the world.
And they gave it away, that old reed organ today—
Gave it where only a children's plaything 'twill be—
“Mother's old stuff.” And many adornments about,
On floor and on wall her beautiful hands had placed—
Hands that nursed and fed us and patted our heads,
Hands that put us to bed and found our lost things—
Beautiful hands, earnest, industrious, faithful hands,
Hands never tiring to take care and do for us.
O of things that those beautiful hands once touched,
Say you not “mother's old stuff”—you lie by the word!
When you say it, your hearts do not feel and your eyes do not see.
You miss what is sweet and lovely and true in the world,
And hold only baubles and bagatelles, lies and sin.
Soon broken and void and empty that beautiful house—
Angel mother is gone and the heart strings are broke,
Weary and sad “Nuts” will come home no more—
But you let him alone, he will sing of “mother's old stuff,”
Of some things he saw so rare and sweet in the world—
Gone, gone, gone, till he wakes to see
Mansions of glory, all filled and adorned
With “Mother's old stuff,” and mother a queen in the midst,
Where faith and work and earnestness radiance take
And shine like the sun, where that offal of carrion, pride,
Never, O never, thank God, can come!

THE SMELL OF THE SEA

Fresh and free is the smell of the sea,
And the wind that blows it here to me,
Blows all away the care of the day.
For narrow rooms and narrow thought,
And little works that I have wrought,
And troubled and wearied myself about,
You can't come here; this is the sea—
The wide, far rolling, untired sea;
And the wind that blows from it to me,
That smells of the sea so fresh and free,
Blows all away the care of the day.

DICK TO LETTY AT FORTY-FIVE

If you hadn't cared more for "Uncle Reeve"
 Than to go to church with me,
 And so insignificant did leave
 Your lover seem to be,
 I do avow
 I might be your happy husband now.

If you hadn't whispered with that boob,
 Who sing would when you played,
 His head, it was of wood a cube,
 He a botch of singing made,
 All did allow,
 I might be your happy husband now.

If you had but realized it well
 What a bashful calf was I,
 And tender had been with love—the spell—
 Till my diffidence was by,
 'Twould have come out all right somehow.
 And both of us be happy now.

 THAT NAME "LETTY"

Why, it can't, 'twill never die,
 This old first love of mine.
 Forty long years have gone by,
 And I said her name to myself today,
 And many a time along the way,
 As I resign
 Myself to my burden, or gay am I,
 I say—"Letty."

O blue eyes, and sweet and fair,
 Girlish lady face,
 I can't forget, I see you there,—
 Never another just like you,—
 Those winsome eyes so big and true,
 And every grace
 Of girlhood budding lithe and rare—
 And that name, "Letty."

THAT NAME "LETTY"—*Continued*

O I can't get rid of that asking look,
 As it lifted it up to me,
 It's just as sweet as when it took
 My trembling boyhood heart away,
 Back in that bashful melting day,—
 And tenderly,
 Of my being you've filled every nook,
 My own "Letty."

O I wonder what you'd think if you knew,
 In the two score years gone by,
 Something in me is to you so true,
 That a million times your name I've said,
 To point my thought, or sad or glad,
 And that till I die,
 I'll say on to myself that name of you,
 That sweet name "Letty."

TO LETITIA AT LAST

Though I loved and lost a thousand times,
 And pain is the story of me,
 I forget them all save one infinite wrong,
 One life catastrophe.

* * * * * *

When a thousand faces glint me about,
 If eyes and lips I see,
 And features fair that mind me of you,
 Then jumps the heart of me.

* * * * * *

Once I sat at your feet an hour,
 I, foolish, was sure you were mine;
 But I'm glad for the lie—'twas one glorious hour
 In my day's long wretched line.

* * * * * *

O every incident, happening, word,
 After forty years gone by,
 I remember so well. And they'll never be stale
 For my thinking till I die.

* * * * * *

For eternity is there no reason to be,
 And chaos and night and death
 Are the heirs of time, if life-wronged-love,
 No rest and requiting there hath.

RHYMING TRICKS

When you're whipped in the fight,
 Then just for spite,
 Sing of some fellow in paradise,
 Where everything is so perfectly nice,
 Till you fancy it's you—
 Or, the opposite quite—
 Paint up the thing so black and so blue,
 A million times worse than what's true—
 And soon you're glad it ain't you.

FROM EXPERIENCE

Tired out? Better, least said,
 Like, you wisht you was dead,
 Etc.,—go to bed
 and sleep.

Work stale? Don't help what's said,
 As life a botch and wisht you was dead,
 Etc.,—go down town
 and loaf.

Worry sick? Don't cure what's said,
 Like "H——l!"—and wisht you was dead,
 Etc.,—take some
 Castor oil.

ODE TO SWEAT

Hurrah for "sweat."
 I mean it.
 Never sung
 Yet,
 Like it ought to be.
 Word short and fit,
 Among
 The best in our vocab'lry.

ODE TO SWEAT—*Continued*

Fit
To what it denotes.
Not “presperation,”
Or evaporation,
Or any other ‘catisation
Of Latin roots.

Old farm talk
Was full of “sweat.”
Got the crack and ring,
Of the very thing,
By ging.

Like “walk chalk,
Ginger, blue,”
Or “don’t balk,”
And “get in a stew.”
Old farm talk.
I need it yet,
When I want to get
Something said
That isn’t dead.

What’s “sweat”?
It’s getting wet
With your carcass juice.
It’s work like the deuce,
And get boiled out
Of the meanness
In you,
And change to leanness,
Your lubber fat.
I tell you true
That
’T’ll make you sleep
Good and deep.

Try’t,
High brow,
“All in” now,
And race and chase
Off on a bum

ODE TO SWEAT—*Continued*

For recreation,
And more damnation,
Of nerves unstrung,
And temper wrung,
Bring home.
Can't deny't.

You dumb
Dunce,
Work once
A whole day
Away,
Till sunset,
And sweat.

Hugh! Adam fell
Tor'd Hell?
"Nit."
Fell up,
Tor'd the top.

Nothing to do,
Whole day through,
But sit
Around,
Kissin' Eve,
Or pickin' berries,
Only worries
How to kill
The time, and so
Got their fill
O' what's slow,
Till they found
That tree.

Condemned to leave
Such a place,
"Sweat in the face"—
Good thing.
Better off a darn sight.
Got right,
Instead of wrong,—

ODE TO SWEAT—*Continued*

By jing!
Cursed by the old song?
No.
'Twasn't so.
Blessed it seems to me,
And out o' misery.

Plowed all day,
Friday.
Sod like leather.
Roots and stones
To shake my bones;
Hot weather
Too.

Rough and tough,
Pulling that plow,
Around somehow,
And horses three,
To wallop me.
Whew!
Didn't I sweat?
You bet.
And didn't I eat?
'Twas never beat;

And say
Ned,
Didn't I lay
Out flat
In bed
That
Night?
So flat, and feel
Real
Fine.
And rest
And sleep too,
With all my might.
"Sweat"!
Best
Thing yet.

ODE TO SWEAT—*Continued*

No pills for mine.
Sweat I sing,
Sweat's the thing
To cure your fret.

Hurrah for sweat!

I WANT RAIN

Those city folks say "It's such a fine day!"
But I farmer think just the opposite way.
They say the sky "lovely" and air "so clear"
And th' country so grand that lies around here.
But I think of my grasses so thirsty and small,
And my just up corn that don't grow at all,
And the ground like powder, dusty and dry,
And my garden so sick when I pass by,
Where my peas so slender and yellow remain—
I don't see any poetry—I want rain!

WONDERS THERE WERE THEN

By the little lake that rambled round
The lower stretch of pasture ground,
Between the hilly field above
And sandy road below,
There often in our childhood time,
In warmer months we'd go,
And play away the whole long day,
For long the day was then.

And wading knee-deep in and out,
And paddling in our home-made boat,
And sailing log or plank or brig,
When winds blew up the tide,
And let them scud away and beach
Far on the other side,
And fancy we did shipwrecks see,
For we could fancy then.

WONDERS THERE WERE THEN—*Continued*

And oft we'd stray along the shore,
 And dream us Crusoe lost once more,
 Or Paul cast up on Malta's coast,
 Where wild seemed to our ken,
 The country 'round and th' people all,
 As strange and savage men—
 Great heroes we thought us to be
 For the world had heroes then.

O I've sailed the wild Atlantic main,
 Ten seas I've crossed and crossed again,
 I've travelled till I'm weary now,
 This stale old world around,
 But like that pond on father's farm
 No waters have I found,
 Such wonders gave in wind and wave—
 For wonders there were then!

RED CURRANTS

O the round-cheeked ruddy misses,
 Tart and juicy, melting so,
 Little queens of all the garden,
 How they came, you want to know?
 Once the plumpest little girlie,
 So jolly she and lively, O,
 A great big bear he caught and squeezed her,
 Made a million blood drops flow
 On the ground, in old Achaia,
 And there God made the currants grow.

DON DWINGOL MINIKEN

Don Dwingol Miniken, the Wing-Wong man,
 He's the queerest kid you understan',
 Ever went clod-hoppering in the lan',
 With 'is feet in the air an' 'is head on the groun',
 Ever'thing with 'im is upside down—
 Eats an' sleeps an' goes actin' aroun'
 Like a wanderin' loon. He's out of tune
 With ever'thing goin' under the moon,
 An' I think he'll go plumb crazy soon—
 You can't do nothin', you understan'
 To git 'im straight—twist all you can—
 Don Dwingol Miniken, the Wing-Wong Man.

*ALICE

I've loved it long, and I've seen it oft,
 And the same old love is mine each time.
 Why pass I by, some hundreds by,
 Classic scenes and genres old,
 By master's hands,— unendingly,
 While here I stand and gaze aglow,
 With glad sweet thought broke out in rhyme?

Ah, grateful I am to the master grand
 Who paints my happy homeland here,
 Not foreign curls or face or dress,
 Not tragic attitude, or myth,
 Or nymph or grace or shepherdess,
 But a jolly genuine American girl,
 Than all the world to my heart more dear.

Because that in that face so bright,
 That step so light, that air so free,
 Smile parted lip and twinkling eye,
 That gay free-hearted girlishness,
 Unmeasured, kindly jollity,
 My sister, sweetheart, bride—my own—
 An American happy home I see.

*William Merrit Chase's painting in the Chicago Art Institute.

VENUS GIVES THE CESTUS TO JUNO

Divinest artist of classic mould,
 Never wearying, never old—
 Fresh as June your lesson of mirth
 Through three milleniums passed on earth.

See Juno there, prim, squared shoulders, erect,
 Never forgetting her poise, never neglect
 Of one lineament to show she is matron, born to command,
 A ruler's wife, aweing you—stately—grand.
 But mark, who gives the cestus, Venus sweet,
 Shoulders round and stooping a bit, just neat
 For your arm, form so lithe and bending well,
 Shaped to your lap. Ah I need not trouble to tell

VENUS GIVES THE CESTUS TO JUNO—*Continued*

Who steals love, compels it. You or I,
To kiss those lips of the Cupid bow would die.
Ho! the world's upset. Jupiter's wife
The magnificent, has missed the greatest thing in life.
She don't know how—and Venus, the girl with the smile
And the manner naive, Juno the queen to beguile,
That she show a face a little less winter and stone,
Some gleam of delight 'gainst the hateful thing, being alone,—
Venus knows how a wonderful girdle to make,
That she may prevail who wears it, Love captive to take,
And it she hath woven with untrammelled spirit, and she
Hands it to Juno, and Juno, great Juno—ah me!
She must have it to win her own husband's love,—
The proud thing! Affairs are bad on Olympus above,
Like they are here. But who cares or seeks to know where,
So pride gets whipped and must beg either here or there.

And ho! ho! blind singer of Colophon,
Wondrously think we, we get on,
Megalomaniacs to write—and then we
For a drink of truth cool and fresh turn back to thee.

WORSHIPPING ATHENA

Those old Greeks were a noble race,
Calm and composed in every face,
Come down to us in their sculptures fine,
Where the parts of their genius splendid shine.
Nor Amazon women, nor centaur beast,
Nor giant brutes could in the least
Conquer them—all their faces pain,
In every contest being slain,—
So grand their bas-reliefs all tell
Where pediment, friezes and meope spell
Out the story the ages down,
In many a struggle and feat of renown.
And their goddess most honored in Olympus above,
Not limp Aphrodite, goddess of love,
Born where the wild waves terribly rolled—
Love like the waves is never controlled—
Irregular, awful—old Poseidon blue

WORSHIPPING ATHENA—*Continued*

Horse-maker, sea-ruffian—they discarded him too—
 They worshipped Athena, born from Jove's head,
 Goddess of brains and wisdom instead,
 Goddess of arts and industry, peace,—
 Of defensive war only, patroness—
 But mighty her spear, that in her hand
 Should always a winged Victory stand.
 Chaste, handsome goddess, the civil advance,
 Always her worship was meant to enhance,
 The tale of her triumph so beautifully told
 By Pheidias' art can never grow old,
 There in her Parthenon. But say,
 There's one thing we've done in our Yankee day
 They never came up with, our women we gave
 The ballot you see, and now we have
 Free from tobacco-juice, filth and dirt,
 And stories obscene that your stomach invert,
 And bribes and lying and every rot
 That Lord Man Politic ever begot—
 Free from it all is each polling place—
 And of whiskey and treats there's never a trace.
 Modesty, fineness and civilized things
 They got by the woman, to whom ever clings
 Something saving, when chaste, I aver—
 But they didn't go far enough worshipping her.

ABBOT THAYER

How angels and goddesses he made there,
 Of his own New England maidens fair,
 Futurist painter indeed was he,
 Showing not what we are but what we shall be.

Beings for heaven—heaven he found
 In commonest folks and virtues around.
 White-souled Abbot Thayer—saint—
 What a gospel he preached with paint!

POMONA THE BEAUTIFUL

Crab apples red, crab apples yellow,
Among the green, and a little fellow,
 A round cheeked little fellow,
Up there picking them for me.

Crab apples red, crab apples yellow,
Smooth and glossy, ripe and mellow,
 Juicy so and mellow—
And brim-full baskets under the tree.

Picture for a kiddies' primer,
Picture of something good and summer,
 Of things that really handsome be—
For there by lineaments and tresses,
Cheeks and eyes and leafy dresses,
 Pomona the beautiful we see.

TO THE WOODS

When autumn winds are blowing cool,
 And corn in field is yellow,
When new picked apples in the barrel
 Are turning sweet and mellow,—

When cider 'round the keg bung-hole
 Is lively capers cutting,
O then I'd take a day and go,
 Away to woods a-nutting.

Some laughing, shouting youngsters take
 And if will go, my Betty,
Then I can show off climbing high,
 Before a girl that's pretty.

With browning leaves and purpling trees,
 And od'rous nuts down drumming,
And all the fun and poetry,
 A-going and a-coming,

I'll once a fall to celebrate
 The year in all his glory,
That best old way, a-nutting go,
 Then home and sing the story.

CABBAGE HEADS

We oft make fun of a cabbage head, we folks
Pert, know it all, nothing ever beyond us.
“Ha, ha,” we say, “dumb old cabbage head—
Poor nut—he don’t know what is in the world.”
And oft I noted how the cabbage head,
With all his garden fellows brown and dead,
Grows on thru autumn storms, cheery, at work,
Packing away rich store of what shall make
Our winter board complete. And who loves not
The taste and aroma rich that he begets,
When mother dinner makes for hungry boys?
A cabbage head, ungainly, but never vain,
Country-dressed, but with a heart all white and good.
O well, we smart ones soon would paupers be,
Shelter and clothes and food and higher needs
Would come up lacking on some winter day,
Had not a cabbage head all busy been
In cold, in biting winds and sunshine scarce,
God’s work doing. ’Tis cabbage heads at last
Go on the pedestals. Who ever hears of us?

OUR AMERICAN SUNFLOWERS

Jolly they grow and beat the weeds,
And face the sun till they look like him,
Prim and proud till the big gray seeds,
Crowd each disk to the petalled rim.

Now heavy with fruitage low they bend,
Like weary humans in ageful care,—
Soon cut and stored in the crib their end,
Handsome and odorous drying there.

Brave youth and richest maturity
Have filled to the fullest both life and law.
Now fat will our hens all winter be,
And for our glorious sunflowers, say I. “Hurrah!”

AND 'ALL GREAT THINGS I OWN

Stand the trees with browning leaves,
Against the cool fall sky,
With mare-tail clouds o'erspreading it,
High, high, high.
Dun fields are stretching far and wide,
Where through I walk for home,
While many a mellow thought of life,
Into my mind doth come.

That never a great thing I have done,
Was a burden thought this morn,
But how it faded with hours of work
Husking the beautiful corn.
Hearty, generous crop 'of gold,
Comrade with you all day—
How pride and all its feverings
Fled in shame away.
And I am one in a world of good,
Not one apart, alone—
I argue not—just dream and sing—
And all great things I own.

IN ALL THE EARTH

The most interesting things that be
And things of most utter monotony,
The folks you see.

TERRIBLY MISER'BLE or BEIN' A POET

“Sing and be happy,” folks will say,
Good way
T' talk about singing as they kno' it,
But fer a poet,
Er a would-be—like me't don't fit.
The thing of it
Is—I'm miser'ble if I don't sing
The hull day thru,
An' just as terribly miser'ble
If I do.

GLOBE TROTTERS

Going, fussing, gadding on,
Chasing round and round,
Never yet of grace or rest
A minute have they found.
Sour, ugly at the world,
Of a lie the tool,
Yet crazy still some more to see
Of the old fool!

BUILDING FENCES

The clouds are blue, the marshland blue,
The farther landscape all of blue.
A cool wind blows and whistles through
The world of things. The trees are bare,
In field are weed stalks waving there.
The crops are in, the farm work done,
At dinner time low stands the sun.
But ere shall fall the winter snows,
A little while the farmer does
His making fences and setting trees
And such, before the ground shall freeze.
The earth from every growth is clear,
So plans a bit another year.
All day we set each rough-hewn post
To draw the line to the farthest
Side of the bushy, unkempt land,—
'Twas good to see the long row stand.
We're marking something for reclaim,
From useless foulness to redeem.
Next year clean plowland 't will be,
And splendid tawny oats you'll see
A-growing there. And everything,
The fence and crops and harvesting,
Will seem all good and please the eye,
As we go Sundays walking by.
And later growths of wheat and corn,
The field and landscape will adorn,

BUILDING FENCES—*Continued*

And then for some years in between
The crops, a splendid pasture scene.
A fence looks good—'tis a pioneer
Of many a good thing coming near.
O not of a howling wilderness,
Of every man-thing comfortless,
Does a poet sing a pleasant song,
Heartening our way along—
Nor of cities crowded full of men,
Where like as in a prison pen,
Wild passions rage on street or stage,
And never a calm good thing is seen
That makes sweet numbers to begin.
But where man's hand with nature joined,
Makes one the earth, we beauty find,
Where humanness with soil and field,
Or house and garden, pictures yield
Of God's one world, producing good,
Of toil and joy and home and food—
Ah! there we see and there we sing
Many a simple lovely thing,
Calming, sweetening, resting life,
From dearth of good or human strife.
And great Millet doth there impart
The wealth and glory of his art,
Man a piece of God's great whole
At work, and finds again his soul.
And do you know, nothing so
Rests and makes me sing as t' go
Driving my horse and rig around
The streets that lie upon the bound
Of that old town, or to go out
Among the little farms about,
And note what human heart and hand
Have done in garden, yard or land.
Just a gig-ride, one hour long,
And home I come with some new song,
Especially if th' November wind
Is blowing fresh, and I should find
Some one civil things commence
In earnest—building a new fence!

DECEMBER ECHOES

Hark the echoes in the woodland,
In the dark and leafless woodland,
For the sun is low, and cloudland,
Old December's winter cover,
All the land doth hover over,—
And the barking of old Rover
Make the echoes great and hollow.
Leaps the farm-boy's heart to follow,
For the squirrel's fat and bunchy,
With their bushy tails all hunchy,
Handsome in the tree-tops sitting,
Or from branch to branch now flitting,
Quarry splendid are for getting.
And the farm work well is ended,
Tools are stored and barns are mended,
Now's the time with gun on shoulder,
And days getting cold and colder,
Best time of the year enjoying.
Goes he chasing, hunting, boying,
Through the woodland loudly ringing,
Where all treeland seems a-singing,
Bark and shot and shout outflinging,
Making echoes great and hollow—
What boy wouldn't jump and follow!

THE AMERICAN SCHOOL-MA'AM—1911

Who makes this Republic? I'll tell you.
Ambition and learning, grit and grace
She hath. And her men in every place,
Tutored and mothered by her, are true.

A nation arises, wait Europe, wait.
Culture and courage are in her train,
She raises a continent to her plain,—
The American school- ma'am makes the state.

*HOW WE FEEL—DECEMBER, 1916

You can fuss and explain and palaver all you will,
There are some things we judge best by the way we feel.
Men and heroes, freedom, daring, great souls,—
Mighty song go not with hog-fat fools.
Tremendously, sickeningly,—while our first bard grubs
In Spoon River carion, and grubs on, and dubs
His work "Authologies"—fine word—he works well, but hell
Is the pabulum, his sponaid a mirror to tell
What the whole country will yet be—we feel it is gone,
The old, the glorious, the free, the great in renown,
The old America sank when the Lusitania went down.

*For over a year the author could not help sing a patriotic song.

SONG FOR THE WIND—Jan. 1918

Blow, blow thou winter wind.
There from the blue horizon blow,
Over the brown old marshes go,
Roar through the tree-tops up on high,
Sweep the mist all out of the sky.
Blow until thou find,
The murkiness all of yesterday,
And blow it all from the world away.

And arise thou wind of God and go,
From Picardy and Lombardy,
Down from the steepes of Muscovy,
From Columbia and Brittania,
'Gainst the black eagle's nest of Germania,
Blow, terribly blow.
Find out all the lies of yesterday,
And blow them forever from earth away.

IN FEBRUARY '18

What's the use to lie about it,
These are days of gloom,
Gone from life—and who will doubt it—
Gone is all the bloom.

IN FEBRUARY, '18—*Continued*

Our million beautiful boys are gone,
Gone into the awful hell,
At home we see a darkened sun,
And old war stories tell.

Some day we may be glad again,
And forget the awful past,
But weep, if need be, tell the pain,
While the fearful day shall last.

There's nothing gained by false pretense,
To walk our heavy way,
Let's call it GLOOM, declare our need,
Then honestly we'll pray.

THE MAN FROM MONTANA

Written upon seeing Lawrence Nelson's picture of the above title at the Allied Artists' Exhibition in New York City.

He does not fit to a uniform,
He was not made for dress-parade,
But work and cold and heat and storm,
For these was made.

He can not pose, but he can bear,
And he will carry the burden through,
Those shoulders, great, ungainly, square,
For loads will do.

Never for glove or cane those hands,
But mighty for toil or deed are they,
God-made, and ready to meet demands,
Of a struggle day.

That bronzed face, those far-look eyes,
Were made by blizzard and sleet and hail,
And drouth and sun-beat mountain skies.
He will not fail.

THE MAN FROM MONTANA—*Continued*

Such lines of earnestness are there,
Such marks of one who hath been tried,
I know he'll stand, I know he'll dare,
And stem the tide.

I'm glad you painted him as he is,
My Lincoln-like American.
I'm proud, great artist, just for this,
You dared—
To paint a man.

Note—The picture was posed for by Private Peter G. Henderson, presumably from Montana.

THE QUESTIONS—AUGUST, '18

'Tis not the losses, nor is it what
Shall come tomorrow, for it is not
Defeat or triumph now in the fight,
It is, "Are we right?"

'Tis not the wounds, nor is it what
Shall cut these bodies, for it is not
How to die we shall go through,
It is, "Are we true?"

'Tis not the fearful changes to come,
Nor how they shall smite our land and home,
It is, "Have we grace to pass under His rod?"
It is, "Are we one with God?"

HE'S GONE—OCTOBER, '18

He's gone, he's gone, my boy is gone,
Two nights ago he went away,
He kissed us in the lone dark hours,
And rushed to his first reveille.

HE'S GONE—*Continued*

And wifie worked till past midnight,
His shirts and things might ready be,
And borrowed here and traded there,—
The order came so suddenly,—

Cut down an undersuit of mine,
And darned his socks all new again,
And fixed his clothes and packed his grip,
And then he ran to catch the train.

O 'tis so lonesome 'round the place,
Two days and like two months they seem.
Nobody here to milk the cows,
Nobody here to drive the team,

Nobody here to call at six,
Nobody home at set of sun,
I chore and chore and chore till noon,
My work I never can get done.

O 'tis so Sunday-lonesome like,
All day I am so drear and sad,
And never yet I loved him so,
Or thought how fine a boy I had.

O God what things we must give up,
This war to win, this beast to slay,
O country, home and liberty,
How dear thou art to us today.

And beautiful sacred flag of ours,
For every loved boy over there,
A group of loved ones swear anew,
To keep thee floating free and fair.

How quick, should blatant traitor mouth,
Say word against thine aims or worth,
We who have given our best and all,
Will smite forever down to earth.

THE CALL—OCTOBER, '18

My God we are in the midst of it,
Already the beast is at bay.
My daily had a whole page of
Casualties today.

Go on, brave boys, to the finish,
Garrison all the land,
Collect for each bill to the fullest,
For justice make a stand.

We'll reverse the story of nations,
And show war can not pay.
Then on to Berlin clean-handed
And establish an assize day,

That a thousand years will look back to,
And never once forget,
That wanton war is a liar,
And never did pay yet.

IRISH AGAIN—OCT. '18

Through fire and screams and hell in the air,
Brave Tessie stays right there in her chair.
The telephone girl stays right at her post,
Warning the folks of the holocaust.
Of the deed it is fitting a poet should boast,
But that she is Irish, that pleases me most.

A half million shells in thunder and flame,
Are burning at Kingsland. A girl by the name
McNamara sits there with the disk at her ear,
Telling them all of the danger near,
So that not a single life is the cost—
But that she is Irish that pleases me most.

A girl with levers and plugs and "rings,"
And calls and answers and telephone things,
Did the big work that fearful day,
And hurrah for the lass with the grit to stay,
In the face of death right there at her post—
But that she is Irish, that pleases me most.

FRIENDS AND FUN—NOVEMBER, '18

A great thing to have friends it is,
Friends that are jolly and friends that are good,
Folks that work and folks that are earnest in life,
But folks that will take a day off sometimes.
Fun with them is fun the right kind.
People that care more for fun than for work
Are people that only excitement seek,
And that's different from fun meant to recreate,
It's soon, that kind, no fun at all,
But gaming, and drink, and the "illicit rove."
Friends and fun—
As much for real life,
As sweetheart and wife and babies are,
And good work and good sleep and good eats,
And a fight for the right somewhere,
And help to those that are in need.
Well you remember November eighth
In nineteen hundred eighteen, the year
That the great German bully gave up the fight.
In America here celebration was made
Three days too soon,
But none the less greatly indeed 'twas made.
Our fire-whistle blew at half past one,
And soon all the whistles far and near,
Began to blow and the bells to ring,
And the whole wide land was a-hum everywhere.
And flags shot up on every side,
And the children went marching through the streets,
Marching and singing and shouting and making noise every
way,
And everybody knew everybody he met,
And waved hands and some hurrah thing said,
And lumps of joy were in every throat,
And waters of gladness in every eye,
For it was over at last and Johnny would soon come
marching home.
The horrid thing was a thing of the past,
The thing that never had a right to be,
And the world seemed it might become
The good old world again.
And three times I fired my fowling piece,
There in my own back-yard.

FRIENDS AND FUN—*Continued*

And I brought out my flag anew,
And down to the streets of our town I went,
And they were alive with people sure.
And I met a bunch of young preachers I knew,
And together we gave out the biggest old yell,
And who first began it I'll never know.
Soon was evening at hand.
One always finds friends at such a time.
And two just such as I've told about
Were sober Carlton and droll Isabel.
Isa makes fun and Carlton likes to be where it is.
And that's about right.
When no audience is what good are performers anyhow?
O keep me always a long way off
From the man or woman that can never be
An audience even.
Somebody I want to be around,
That sometimes at least, will laugh at my jokes.
And Carlton and Isa went along with us,
And around through the towns we went.
Such a night was that!
First our auto we drove through our own pretty burg.
Everybody shouted, made noises, paraded, performed.
Or on the sidewalk a good audience made.
Then to Morristown old and historic we drove,
That's on the road to Morris Plains,
Where is the hospital for the insane.
When we go that way,
It is always our joke we are going there,
Where we ought to go.
For one time, when a bunch of us
On Morristown Square, by our auto stood,
Laughing and joking and cutting up,
And made as if we would start for home,
A queer acting fellow came quickly up,
And was determined to get in and ride with us,
Saying he also was going to Morris Plains,
As though no question were in his mind where we
belonged.
That joke lived in story for weeks and weeks.
Well, old Morristown was sure awake.
What a parade with half of the town
And the country far around marching in it!

FRIENDS AND FUN—*Continued*

While crowded the sidewalks the other half
A magnificent audience to make.
What fixups, what noises, what banners, what fun!
I wonder, could he have seen it, what would he have
thought,
That hero grand, his country's father and greatest of men.
This very old town where he two winters spent
There with his troops and generals around,
Two bitter winters of those trying days,
All too much forgotten his farewell address,
His country all through with such a war,
And a mixup in Europe, as he never dreamed.
And out of it all victorious so,—
This same old Morristown all ablaze
With a celebration and carnival such
As it never had seen before,
Rejoicing so in what we had finished over there.
Each group found a way to have its fun,
And we found ours.
We made believe we ignorant were,
New, green arrivals from the country in town.
And this gay bunch and that gay bunch
Passing, we all so innocently asked,
"What is all this excitement about?"
And as one blithe lass with her pals went by,
When of her I most innocently did inquire
What all the fuss and uproar was for,
Out of her mouth took her painted horn,
Just long enough to say to me,
"Isn't it funny!"
And when to another pair of red cheeks,
That bloomed in the midst of a group
Of lads and soldiers and other sweethearts,
I said, "What's going on; what does all this mean?"
Fast she stopped and looked upon me
With a look of astonishment, as though I sure were
The greatest curiosity she had ever seen,
And just cried out, "O, for the love of James!"
And one old darkey to whom I addressed
Myself most earnestly, and said
What had happened, what are the people so excited about?
With kindness and friendly interest much,
And evident pity for my ignorance, said,

FRIENDS AND FUN—*Continued*

“Why, don’t you know,
 The Kaiser has surrendered, the war is through!”
 * * * * *

Friends and fun—
 We slept good that night.

ROOSEVELT—JANUARY, '19

He’s gone, my hero man is gone,
 On to the great new hunting-ground.
 And how he tried the earth when here,
 And he was master. Nor death nor fear
 Nor lying down were in his life.
 Interesting, fresh and keen the strife.
 And when my trudge and tramp is done,
 And I’ve tried my jobs out every one,
 Then venturing ’neath some greater sun,
 May I with him be found.

A DOUGHNUT—JAN., '19

A doughnut is a thing to eat,
 That for rich eatin’ can’t be beat.
 Says Billy, eatin’ them by the score,
 “Make some more, ma, make some more.”

Round and browned and so endued
 With tastin’, smellin’, lookin’ good,
 Let’s all keep sayin’ o’er and o’er,
 “Make some more, ma, make some more.”

Melt in your mouth and each has got
 Hole in the middle. Hold a lot,
 When on each finger three or four.
 “Make some more, ma, make some more.”

’Twas doughnuts that the lasses made,
 So Captain Lukey, just home, said,
 Licked the Germans. ’s I said before,
 “Make some more, ma, make some more.”

A DAY OF LIFE AND OTHER POEMS

A SPEECH FOR THE TIMES—FEB., '19

The house was crowded, the town was there,
Old people and youth and kids and all.
Flags and bunting filled the air,
Gay and proud was the old school hall.

The speeches were fiery, the music great,
They made the eagle soar and scream.
Terrible the menace to the state,
Each orator more than made it seem.

The captain of a troop of ten,
Listened with firm and earnest face.
His boys in khaki, soldier men,
Sat prim and proper 'round the place.

Then a speech the chairman asked of him,
And quickly he rose and glanced about.
Square up he stood on his wooden limb,
And the speech of the night he shouted out.

"I'll speak where I am, for my words are few—
For your Bolshevik crowd, of hell the spawn,
And your damned 'I. W. W.,'
We're ready now, go bring them on."

We knew he had left a leg in France,
We knew he would back each word with deed.
We knew our safety took no chance,
With men like him to take the lead.

That's why his speech was the biggest one,
And why they shouted with might and main,
Applause for him, when he sat down,
For a life, not words, was offered again.

NO WAR AGAIN—WINTER, '19

For forty years that lie we did believe.
Dignity of human nature did so deceive
And rear its form upright, conceited, proud,
We fell in a dream, blinded, lost in a cloud

NO WAR AGAIN—*Continued*

Of our own imaginings—seemed it could not be again
Among the great and enlightened nations, and then
Came 'fourteen and then came 'seventeen, and my God, we saw
What fools we had been, minds shut to the law
That war is the squaring event, the debt paying day,
When earth's great pile of sin is to be swept away—
Explosion that has to come, for God made us so—
We turn to our own executioners, when sufficient we owe.
When greed and pride and lust shall cease to be,
When I cease to use you and you cease to manipulate me,
Scheming, as heeled and titled, ordained and schooled,
Some way to get the other man hoodwinked and fooled—
Industrial, politic, ecclesiastic, whate'er the way
To get our dirty work done, life's game we play,
And do nothing ourselves, till the slaves will rise and rebel,
And bring war's compensation,—a letting loose always of hell.
When once I'm determined my share of the world's work to do,
When I stop my shirking that makes but my nemesis, you,
When once my pampering and puffing up self shall cease,
And I know I'm a fool to do it, then will be peace.
For Greed when he's grown doth that bigger devil beget,
Pride—and he brings the hate that gets the thing set
For the terrible mangling that comes when the war dogs slip—
HE'S the damned devil-king of all devilship—
Pride that sets man above his fellows must cease
His accursed assumptions, or never on earth will be peace.
Yea, and when man protector and champion shall be
Of womanly virtue—when every young man shall see
His big calling to bring every way each decent girl through
To a marriage that's pure, to wifehood and womanhood true,
Making home, home—the delight that a man will work for,
Busy, happy, content, and no more wants war
To vent the hell that's within—yes, and when
No more are leering, promiscuous Helens, then
No more is fired Troy, no more comes that hell thing to fill
Men's bosoms with jealousy's rage till they want to go kill,
Rushing madly to war—sex-disorder, sex-chaos must cease,
Listen ye who live loose, or you'll never know peace.

A DAY OF LIFE AND OTHER POEMS

JOE QUEERMAN'S VIEW—AUG., '19

An' so fer good yu'll stop all war,
 Make everybody brother—
 Yit all the folks I knowed so far
 Ull fight some way er other.

When kids in school to learn the right,
 An' wipe out our heathen traces,
 An' we had no other way t' fite,
 We jus' made snoots an' faces.

THE POWER TO SAVE—1920

Not arms, not brutes behind,
 Not the destroyers awful hour—
 They fade. No more we find
 One soul that gloats—all are so sick
 Of the reeking stench, the darkness thick,
 Where never a ray of hope they have.
 Goodness, goodness alone,
 Suffering goodness, prone
 And dying, utterly weak,
 Beaten beneath His rod
 Another to save,
 The cross-hung Christ of God—
 He is the Power.

THE TRUTH

Of suff'ring and fear, of anxiety and pain,
 All compact is my every day.
 Glad hours no longer for me remain.
 Ev'n dreams have gone from me away.

Of the better world, by foretaste and sign,
 Did the pleasure I know make strong my faith?
 Ah indulgence alone did I unconfine,
 And the ingrate's sin was of hope, the death.

THE TRUTH—*Continued*

Till today it's hard to believe in God,
To think that heaven is anywhere.
Like a beast I would get me under the sod,
And hide and forget my misery there.

O Lord, 'tis the story of most of us here,
We perverted the use of our blessings by.
We forgot the Giver, and brown and seer,
Winter days are upon us and we would die.

One came seeking, we from him turned,
His cross—it smote us—another day
We the old world tried—his calling spurned—
And weary and wearier grows our way.

O God, utter mercy must save us now,
Break us in sorrow, soften in pain,
Stripe us till feeling and tender—somehow—
O Infinite Patience, try us again.

THE COMING OF JOHN

Portents and signs and wondrous promise of youth,
When midday glares upon us how they fail,
Blank the world and shadowless the light,
Each phantom swept away, all fancy gone.
We dreamed our election, how we would ride high
And all premade our honor and our fame,
By magic wrought. O peculiarly
We were vessels choice—we ne'er asked why.
And now how flat our world, how commonplace
Goes all our course, and we wake up to find
We soon shall die, and utter obscurity
Be all the house we have; and then with pain
And suffocation quite, in birth anew
Stirred we are to see our failure all,
Our uselessness, how we clog the earth,
How we missed the mark, and only now
Are derelict, outcasts, forever left behind,
Except we on the lowest round begin,
And from our narrow place and darkness out,

THE COMING OF JOHN—*Continued*

Climb to light and breath and war of life,
Our kingdom take by blood and fire and death.
Who stands the test? Who sour and peeved sits down,
And all the rest a miserable beggar's tale?
Who here or there, when God of a man hath need,
Curls his lip at black and lying fate,
Bates his breath and grits his teeth? That man
Arises straight to go his martyr way,
In weakness dares begin some littlest work
That shall lead on unto his triumph day.
Then soon aroused, he with prophetic eye,
Measures all the long and thorny road,
But seat with God is at the end he knows.
No other way is left. The world returns each stroke.
The battle on, he throws him in the fray.
God's warrior, once he wields the Spirit-sword,
No more is lying foul in nice fixed camp.
On and on, he is at, he *is* the front.
So from the desert John. Nothing yet
Had he or had that cousin in the north,
Found or done to go with mother's tales.

To priesthood born, the priesthood he despised.
A temple built by that damned Idumean—
Man of blood and lust, and impiously
Posing forth as Israel's savior enough—
To God he could not mimic service there.
Neither under Sadduc's progeny,
Silk-gloved, despising altar, beast, and blood,
Puppets of Rome and Herod's sycophants,
Only the honors and emoluments
Caring for, and selling jobs for gold,—
Lazy, lying, lustful, proud, on watch
But to keep the foolish crowd in awe,
Saying they too were Israel's saviors enough—
Under such this great soul could not bow.
And there was vainful scribe and pharisee,
Each puffed a rabbi to be, law made the god,
And each a chosen premier of that god.
Money and honors, all high seats they sought.
So big were they with dialectic fine,
Jealous and ego full, scant place they gave
For prophet or messiah or even God.

THE COMING OF JOHN—*Continued*

Jerusalem—it broke a young man's faith,
Even of one from old Judea up,
Where yet was found in many a heart and home
Old first love and trust in Jehovah true.
Pride and greed and base obsequiousness
Ruling everywhere, the last time John
That holy city saw and hated so,
Was when his aged sire upon his turn,
Took him there his offices to help,
A stripling but eyeful boy, and came then home
And died and to his fathers gathered was.

To you who live the usual easy life,
Who take the world just as you find it here,
You little know the throes vicarious souls,
Puzzled and angered, suffer all their days,
Much time aloof at all a world so wrong.
Soon John, bereft of mother too, no place
In life or church, he wandered out and down
The desert hills to east and there abode,
Eschewing men, more hermit like each day.
Sought he God out there in the stony waste,
Retired from men like many a saint had done
In ages gone, troubled, earnest, sad.
Ah well, if he unvexed by great soul things,
Uncalled to death and martyrdom, might be
A simple peasant tiller of the soil,
Or shepherd leading out his little flock,
Forth each morn and back again at night
To the village home and his dear wife and child,
Breathing the seven different winds all day,
Happy 'mid Judea's sloping hills,
Drinking of her splendid fountains all,—
Handsome white sheep on the chalky heights,
Greening, rip'ning wheat in the valleys 'round,—
All in his eye, and that glorious blue, so blue,
Of Syria bending all his world above,
His soul at peace, his daily work, his rest.
But such had been but mockery, but pretense,
For John, in whom the flaming Spirit surged.
And like a warrior in some rendezvous
Waits, uncertain where and when to strike,
John, dumbfounded, on from day to day,

THE COMING OF JOHN—*Continued*

Prepares his simple food, his soul at bay.
Now is he puzzled long at the Nazarene,
Who so quietly runs his little carpenter shop,
And fan and fork and sledge and plow designs,
For peasant farmers all around, that come
And talk away their daylight hours, and care
More to banter, gossip and discuss
The time, the zealots, Rome and Juda's chance,
Than till their vales or plow Esdrelon's plain.
And the carpenter listens on and wonders why
That man of God to break his way comes not.
So oft we wait upon and chide, and each
Will misjudge each. So Jesus and so John.

Now like the convert until the truth breaks in,
He every way will try his soul to save,
Till in abandon, in utter giving up,
Ready he is to throw his life away
And end the miserable story once for all,
Then by a thread a seeming chance so slight,
He throws himself on God and mercy pleads,
And God who always stands right near at hand,
When pride falls down, quickly lifts him up,
And shows him what a light and what a way
Of life, all given freely, never earned,
And in that light, farewell he says to self,
And lives for God, and all the world is new,
And truth that seemed so hidden, never guessed,
Is all so simple in the gospel call—
So oft anew in crises great of life,
Our minds are darkened, and we study hard,
We delve and seek, and seem at our wit's end,
And then some last extreme of fear denied,
Joined with some word of prophet or of seer,
Example of some hero gone before,
And our own desp'rate saying unto God,
"Here use me any way, my body kill,
My soul draw out in suff'ring as must be,
Only let me do what must be done,
And let me be something alive and used,
And save me from this dread oblivion,
This wretched failure-prison I am in."
Answers God, and makes us plainly see
The simple only awful thing to do.

THE COMING OF JOHN—*Continued*

So John. The hard and hermit years have gone.
One by one his heart hath swept aside
The thousand lies the age had lived upon,—
Truth and God and the man together come.
All gaudy dreams of king and kingdom fade,
All herald shows thereof he comes to hate,
And for a time despises with his soul
What seemed his marvelous promises of birth.
Gone is the fear of man. His day his night,
The solemn awful stillness of those hills,
The boundless sweep of nightly heavens above,
Sense of the majesty of God beget.
Where in all the world like in that waste,
Those fearful heights and vales, that Jeshimon,
Afar from the softness and the luxury—
Of cities and of men, does one so get
A vision of the verity of God,
The might and right and awfulness of God,
As in Judea's desert east and down,
Through gorge, by cliff to Bahr Lut's sands below?
There John had lived, there sought the honeyed cleft,
There on some upland level locusts took,
There in some cave, some trickling fountain near,
Or by some hollowed rock, where sparse rains fell,
And made a pool, prepared his simple fare.
There on his limestone bed all ridged and hard,
Spread only with his cloak, he slept each night.
Rang round him cry of wolf and oft the lion
From Jordan's jungle up, came prowling near.
What wonder John lost fear of men, and man
Tenderly housed and childlike, high or low!
Oft from some height his eye could sweep far round.
To north a glimpse of Herodium he could get,
Mount where Herod made his show of power.
To south Masada's great black wedge of rock,
Lifted itself against the rainless sky,
Place destined Juda's bloody end to be.
To west far up to the Judean old home ridge
He saw. Near him below dwelt the camel-herd,
Tent-keeper in the wilderness,—here reared
That wondrous, useful, homely, hardy beast,
That crops the thorns and thistles all day long,
And seems to sniff his drink from out the air.
And farther up, where rains fall scantily,

THE COMING OF JOHN—*Continued*

The white flocks seek the herbage green but sparse,
Brought over from the villages each day.
Then comes the wheat fields in the hollows high,
Then gardens, walls and homes and towns again
Far on the ridge. And then the thought would twinge
Deep in his soul—there back he could not go.
The peasant life were cowardice and sloth,
A Nazarite priest and yet no priest would be.
No place for prophet is there anywhere
In all this fixed and nice placed round of life,
Which men arrange so smug and properly.
The prophet down upon them with his word
Must come, and stand, deliver, suffer, die.

But chiefly down to east John oft would look.
There were the awful cliffs, and far below,
Stretched the blue and silent salty sea.
And save where Ain Jidi's sparkling rill
Sprang from the cliff and sought the strand far down,
And greenness made along its winding way,
And gardens irrigated at its lower end,
And bird-song brought and home for man and wife,
No verdure and no milder beauty blessed
All this vast and horrible wilderness,
Lichened, rock-strewn, dry and brown and dead,
Torn with gorge, or heaving in mount and cliff.
And then across the Ghor his eye would range,
There was the Sodom plain, there Nebo's height,
And all along towered Moab's mighty brow.
The stories old of Israel's deeds and sin,
Or of her mighty heroes he dreamed again.
How delivered daring Abraham,
His kinsman, Lot, and Sodom and Gomorrah all,
From eastern kings and made them free again.
How sought the God-friend Abraham, the prince,
Angel visited, and angel led and taught,
Once more to save the cities of the plain,
By prayers and intercessions lifted up
Against the wrath of God, and all their sins,
To no avail. The lesson saddened John,
For his was another Sodom race and time.
Then of those days of the later century,
Oft he would dream, and oft his blood was stirred

THE COMING OF JOHN—*Continued*

At Israel's mighty conquering career
From Sinai up to Heshbon, city proud,
To Edra too,—of Sihon and of Og,
Of Balaam, Balak, and the story all,
How God's own people safe in righteousness,
And battling manfully ahead and clean,
Could not be cursed by seer, nor by the kings
Of Moab or of Ammon held in bay,
And how until the Shittim camp was made,
And sloth and lust that alway go as twins,
And unclean mixing with the heathen tribes,
And turning to Baal-Peor for a God,
And harlotry with Moab's wretched wives—
Idolatry but covers bawdiness—
How all well nigh destroyed the host of God.
Then John bethought him how that man of God,
Moses, hanged the wicked leaders up,
And how one Phineas stood forth alone,
A signal hero of the day and time,
And with his spear thrust through that Zimri foul
And his black Milian strumpet—both to death,
Besmirchers of all Israel's fame and name,
And how he turned Jehovah's awful wrath,
And stayed the plague sent to destroy them all.
Such stirred his soul to be and do for God,
And made him see no easy stage-like way
Is planned for him who battle will for truth,
But blood and danger, harrowing and death,
That sin and lust and hate are old and mean,
And devilish in the race.

Oft in his walk

By day, and in his bed in the silent night,
Over he turned and studied the story all,
Of Israel's devious course and wretched falls.
Oft the Isaiah preachings filled his mind,
Oft as in the Phineas day of old he saw
The viper brood fleeing from the fire of wrath,
And under the ax for burning the barren trees,
And God at hand to purge his threshing floor.
And oft he wondered how the king should come,
What way his tread, who his train and how
In such a world of hypocrisy, lies and sin,

THE COMING OF JOHN—*Continued*

Of cruelty, greed, lust and murder and hell,
How that impossible thing he could ever do,
Set up a kingdom of gladness and love and peace.
And oft he questioned how he could herald be,
Where his start, what his word, to whom
Should he cry his call and not quickly end his course,
An utter fool, forever jeered at and despised.
O this was the hardest—the utter collapse,
The fading to nothing of all his hopes and dreams,
The blank, stale end of all that picture fine,
That glorious thing, when he the herald should ride
In elegant trappings on high before the king.
Was his father deceived, did his mother but dream and was he
The ridicule, butt, and a fool for the merry sport
Of some spirits of air? For often God's noblest men
When low in the dust in failure and darkness and doubt
Their visions deny, and declare them but devil-sent taunts,
To show them how great they are simpletons, imbeciles, dolts,
Ever to fancy they anything great could do.

But never is failure to God's elected men,
He who of all things is the first and last,
He who down the ages looks to see
Who in the trials terrible, the tests that come,
Who God and right, though suff'ring and death therewith,
Will choose, and choose, and choose unto the end,
He foreordains shall come safe through, he plans
Most lovingly for all his course, and sets
The limits for the devil's hindering work.
Like as an earthly father for a son,
Dutiful, true, and worthy of his trust
Who promise gives he will appreciate
That father's help and turn it all to good,
Prepares long years ahead to make that boy
Noble heir and steward of his all,
And who can little do and make no plans
For the Cains, the Esaus, and the Absaloms.
So God. But awful are the clouds betimes,
That shut the light out from his children true,
For our election is not for ease and lust,
But for coming through a fearful fight unscathed.
Oft nothing is left but God, and trust, and prayer,
Utterly hopeless all the world about,

THE COMING OF JOHN—*Continued*

Utterly black the future just before,
Yet still 'tis Him they choose, and dying choose,
'Till God sets forth and makes forever sure
Who are his.

And such was suff'ring John.
Full manhood had arrived. 'Twas growing late.
The eagle wheeled on high each day, at night
The jackal and hyena howled and prowled.
Sometimes he heard the shepherd's evening call,
Sometimes he caught the temple trumpet's sound
When fared he north. Oft could he see below
The winding caravan mark black the Ghor,
Crossing and recrossing Jordan's flood.
Oft on far Macherus' height beheld
The flash of shield or fire of Herod's host,
Little dreaming there would be his end,
Of all he soon would dare and do for God.
Near around were dullard camel herds,
Or at the distance came and went, his cell
To leave and find, some fellow anchoret,
Hating the world, and leaving it more and more.
The days grew terrible. The world went on
The old monotonous, deathful, hopeless way.
God made no move. Soon Israel would die,
Forever submerged beneath the heathen flood.
A hairy man he grew. His coat waxed old,
Its camel hair was glazed, its edges frayed.
His leather girdle hung down worn and thin.

One day he sat him down upon a rock.
The day was like all desert days, the same,
Sun and death and silence all about.
Utterly weary, utterly sick at heart,
He cry would out to God to let him die.
Then some Ain Jidi cenobites passed by.
How old, decrepit, dirty, they did look.
They met a lonely hermit on the way.
He too was dirty, old and weak, and yet,
What pride, what hate, what evidence of hell
In heart, they all did show. He was unclean
Unto those first, they unto him. John saw
Them push him from the path, and stumbling down

THE COMING OF JOHN—*Continued*

He fell, and long was rising up again.
Hatefully on, scarce looking back, the troop
Passed down a gulch. John would have cheered and helped
The fallen man, but oft he charged had been,
“Come not me near, you infidel, unclean!”
The hermit heart he knew. This day and deed
Years did culminate of what had seen
His eyes and learned his soul of hermit ways
And hermit lives. And of ascetic clans
He had seen much and grown all undeceived
About their claims of brotherhood and love,
And show of holiness, ablutions oft
To symbolize the same, when merely form
Or motions going through they came to be,
Like modern Jews the Tabernacles keep
In a little stick—built lean-to 'gainst the house.
In monks and hermits soon he saw one thing,—
Cowards fleeing from the work of life,
The most of them—their lives and all their cult,
Begot from heathenism, never God,
Men doing strange and foolish, revolting things,
Devil-begotten and aping of the brute,
Yea, doing things a beast would never do,
Having grace and sanity infinitely more
Than humans that natural instincts so pervert,
Men hate and envy filled. And as for love
They went to seek, finding devils of air,
With all their curses crowding them about.
And as for sexual health and chastity,
John came to know too frequently the cell
The place of secret vice, while sodomy
Oft the cloister cursed—and yet their dirt
Was clean, and they by decent folks if touched,
Were made unclean. John came at least to see
Both monk and anchoret, and all their kind,
A thousand ways distorted and made mean,
By lives God ne'er intended men should live.
He saw it all but kept himself aloof.
Like they, he too, had into the desert fled,
But the better man was never yet submerged,
In all their lies and filth and atrophy
Of every spring of life. Of late it seemed,
That cenobite or hermit were but names

THE COMING OF JOHN—*Continued*

Of varied ways that men prepared for hell,
And both outcasts of God were most of all,
So wretched mean they shriveled, crouched and died.
Of late the Spirit seemed not warm in him,
Of late when to himself he blamed and cursed
All order and all kingships and all power,
When built on pride and lineage of men,
Ad at their envy and their greed would rage,
That very Spirit struck back, saying "John,
You too are selfish, proud and envious."

That day John sat and thought the hours away,
Nor cared for food or drink till set of sun,
Thought o'er his wondrous boyhood days again,
And all that kindly early bringing up,
O'er his retreat into the wilderness,
And how he dreamed to dwell with God alone,
How strong and earnest God seemed there at first,
How burned his soul with truth and zeal full oft,
Then how the years grew dead and dry and hard.
Forgotten were his dreams that came to nought,
And too his theologic quibblings all,
Only lay before his desperate mind
The emptiness and failure of his life.
Then got the vict'ry the man that was in John.
He stood upon his feet. He cried it out
To all the hills around, "It is a lie,
Before my God it is a lie, useless,
Spirit grieving, but another way
The devil takes to take men in his net,
This hermit life, this wretched hermit life.
I throw it off, I will live it no more,
I will go back to men, tell me my God,
O tell me what to do!"

Ah, there and then

John repented and John anew was born.
John gave up his selfish self to God.
And how the Spirit flooded back that night,
How the light shone on the word of God.
The kingdom was beginning there in John.
"O tell me what to do," there begins
The preacher every time. And there somehow

THE COMING OF JOHN—*Continued*

All broken down, he saw as ne'er before,
 Sin and the wretched sinfulness of sin,
 He saw the whole head sick, the whole heart faint,
 And wound and bruise and putrifying sore
 In men unbound, gaping everywhere.
 What tears that night, what yearning tenderness
 Toward all the world, what kindly visions new
 Of brotherhood that still might live and be
 If men would but repent, what glimpses caught
 Of the kingdom and the king filled all the hours!
 How God's servants great he saw again,
 Elijah come from Tishbe out to preach,
 Amos from the Tekoah hills gone down,
 And Jeremy from Anathoth come up.
 How, O we never will know how,
 When unto God we yield he speaks to us
 Truth never dreamed, wonders never guessed.
 For all of one great piece is truth in us,
 All one chain that binds us unto God,—
 Break one link, and lost, away we drift,—
 And Satan tells us then a million lies,
 Till heart and reason all awry, we go
 Down the current helpless into th' abyss.
 And that weakest link we break so oft,
 Humility, and our just sense of self,
 And straightway grows that monster pride in us.
 And then we are such fools, that prince of sins
 Rules all and leads all other sins behind.

But great and earnest man of God, our John
 Had conquered pride that day, and how he saw
 Vision after vision as ne'er before,
 Saw what his master seer meant when he said
 "Every valley should exalted be,
 And every hill made low," saw the poor,
 The burden bearers, the downcast and the lost,
 How first to them the kingdom must be preached,
 To them the "Am-ha-arets," all despised
 By Israel's princes and false, lazy guides,
 How many a humble one should lift his head,
 The kingdom now his joy and hope, his lot
 Waiting to meet his Lord; saw the proud,
 Saw scribe and elder, priest and pharisee

THE COMING OF JOHN—*Continued*

Low in the dust, fearing the wrath of God,
For all their lies and greed and sore neglect
To feed and lead his lost and scattered flock,
Those the valleys to be exalted, these
The hills to be brought low, that the way for God
Might be opened into every heart,
As in his own heart God had come that day.
How thought upon him rushed, God was at work.
Mightily the Spirit was in his soul again.
And when we God's work do, and truth is preached,
The revival upon us, and barriers all broke down,
That wondrous thing we see, souls born again,
How then scripture we understand, what a light
Shines on every page, how we pass
Our deathful selves beyond and glories see,
And mysteries of the kingdom, never guessed,
And call and consecration, duty, power,
And oneness with our Christ, as ne'er before,—
All comes upon us like a flood, and all
So much at once, 'tis often hard to tell
Which is the first or what the order is.

So John that day and night. He saw the world
And what should be when righteousness should come,
And wolf should dwell with lamb, and should lie down
The leopard with the kid, and altogether
Calf and fatling and young lion, and should lead
Them all, a little child. O what a gleam
Of love, and humble hearts, and heaven here!
It shall be made by the unwearying God,
This kingdom glorious. Always 'tis at hand
When in one heart. The vision is the call.
That was a coal from off the altar brought,
God's altar, where he all of self gave up,
By seraph brought and laid upon his lips,
And cleansed from all uncleanness there they were,
When he forsook his proud and slothful life
And out had cried "God, tell me what to do."
And over again, like prophet of old, he heard,
"Whom shall I send and who will go for us?"
And again he answered, "Here am I, send me."
And how he saw at once the depth, the height,
The sorrow, love, rebuke, the challenge all,

THE COMING OF JOHN—*Continued*

That he must know and do. "Comfort ye,
Comfort ye" unto the broken hearts,
"Soon God the Lord will come and feed his flock,
And he the lambs shall gather with his arm,
And those that are with young shall gently lead,"
Must he cry, and yet unflinching cry
How Israel's princes are rebellious all,
Companions of thieves, an evildoers' seed,
How God will avenge him of his enemies,
How these princes he will unto nothing bring,
And make earth's judges but as vanity.
How all flesh is but grass that withereth,
When once the breath of God upon it blows,
And declare his fan and fire and burning soon,
How to all, without a stint must cry,
"Wash you, wash you, wash you, make you clean."
How he saw that righteousness alone,
Righteousness, prepared the way of God,
Repentance must be cried to every man,
And was nor high nor low nor Jew nor Greek,
Nor Roamn, Indumean, nor man from far,
In all the nations round, how all must bow,
Repent, confess, and to the One Light come.
He saw how Israel was spent and dead,
The holy mount defiled by heathen feet,
Heathen trophies in the house of God,
And abominations where they ought not to be.
He saw that Pontius sat on David's throne,
A Roman hater of every Jewish thing,
The sceptre now from Judah forever gone,
For even Herod, though Rome's sycophant,
Had fostered Jewish life and Jewish ways,
And to the Jews' religion paid respect,—
Called "half-Jew," he held of Israel's blood
Though disgraced, diluted and made vile.
Sure now must Shiloh come, the time is ripe.

How many prophecies of old that night
In wondrous light he saw, we ne'er shall know.
What revelations God made in his soul,
All new, we ne'er shall know. Earth's greatest man,
A prophet prophesied, was he. He took
Of steps in kingdom things far in advance

THE COMING OF JOHN—*Continued*

Of all his compeers in the mighty line.
Great seers had looked into God's truth before,
And infinitely beyond their times had seen
The way of God, the kingdom and the king,
But in none there gleamed immediateness,
World-oneness and the utter righteousness,
That God would have, not knowing place nor rank
Of temple priest or earthly potentate.
In none had shot the pang, the gloom, the woe,
The utter failure of all ways of men
To find out God, in none had vision come
Of the king at hand and standing in the midst,
As in the mind of John that autumn night.
To him the dimness was enough. On all,
On Galilee and nations far and wide,
They that walked in the land of the shadow of death,
Now must the great light shine. Even now somewhere
The child is born, the son is given, the Wonderful,
The Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Father everlasting
The Prince of Peace. John had faith
That in his beauty he would see the king.

That gift apocalyptic, how comes it,
Unto a soul upon the altar, th' world
All suffering out, him wholly given to God?
We know not how His mighty Spirit works,
We know John said, "I will be the voice
And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed."
For God the Lord will come with his strong hand,
Like as in my heart he came to-day,
So before all men he shall appear,
And he shall fill them with the burning fire,
Like as he hath flamed my soul to-day,
He must come, I will die to open the way.
I claim his promise here and now to-night,
I go to be his crying voice to men,
And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed."
So John. The world was weary awaiting him.
God had waited for the faith of John,
For weary aeons God awaited John.

Leaped on John's mind. Man the king should be,
Yet God must be. How out of struggling souls,

THE COMING OF JOHN—*Continued*

The vision long ago had been compelled,
When every agency of mortal man had failed,
And death eternal seemed would end it all,
The story of miserable men—vision true
And God inspired—vision of God himself,
Bareing his arm when no man he saw,
And wondered that no intercessor was.
That the last great cry of prophecy,
How in his soul John grasped its meaning now,
How God can not be God and fail to come
When dying men upon His mercy fall.
'T must happen next, God must come, 'tis time.
For John, the best man in the world, had failed,
With all the world, himself upon God throws.
And he that openeth the scripture all,
To earnest souls soon taught it unto John,
How he the Branch should know, the David's son,
The truly serving one, the lamb of God—
The spirit of the Lord shall on him rest,
Nor shall he cry, nor cause to lift his voice
Out in the street, and loving tenderness
And utter goodliness be all his mien.

Glorious night for all the world was that,
The herald had come, the kingdom could break through.
Weary and long preparing days had been,
Of this wilderness John had seen forever enough,
Forever that grotto left he with the night.
Down in the Jordan-circle at set of sun,
There at the southmost ford he cried it out,
His sermon first, there where they come and go
Ceaselessly all day and all night long,
Horses and camel trains and donkey droves,
Loaded with wood and wheat and fruits and oil,
And wool and skins and manufactured things,
A hundred kinds for desert dwellers far,
And men that walk, and men that ride the beasts,
Peasants, shepherds, soldiers, servants all
In one great crowd,—robbers and wicked men.
And th' earnest and plodding, the kingdom hoping for,—
Every manner of soul that God hath made,
Or Satan has marred to mark them for his hell,—
There they rest and eat and drink and talk,

THE COMING OF JOHN—*Continued*

And there the first time for four hundred years,
Where Jews go wandering in the world about,
They saw and heard a prophet of God again.

John had come, our story endeth here,
Save that we tell of the excitement and surprise,
That everywhere did spread, far north, far south,
To east, to west, in city, hill and plain,
And how they came from every side to hear
The word of God again, how John himself
Astonished was to see his message grow,
How did weep poor souls, confess, repent,
How soon the baptism sign adopted he,
Not as a thing he as a boy had seen,
The proselyte rite, but a sign of washing to be
For all men from their sins and entrance to,
Not Judaism's barred and barren sect,
But the kingdom great and blessed of God.
Now the corn and wine were gathered in,
The time for beating olives had not come,
The feast of booths and joy was scarcely by,
One sabbatic year was just at hand,
And freed from many labors how they came,
How they crowded, how expected they
Great things to see, things that they had dreamed
And hoped for and discussed a thousand ways,
They and their fathers for a thousand years.
And there by Jordan's crossings south and north,
By Nimra's waters where the reeds do grow,
On paths to Amon and to Moab's plain,
By Jabbock brook, and by the upper fords,
That lead to Gilead and the wide Hauran,—
By Jezreel's sparkling stream and Aenon's spring,
And all the fountains down to Jericho,
There, where the pilgrims by the devious way,
From Galilee unto the sacred city go,
And home again, to and from the feasts,
Samaritans and the horrible road to miss,
By Jordan-circle waters, everywhere
That men would rest and hear, John went to preach.
He a strong man was, and strong men soon
From all about did join themselves to him.
Like David and his thirty and his three,

THE COMING OF JOHN—*Continued*

He was a hero, and heroes gathered round.
So came that group from Lake Gennesaret,
His disciples to be, and then rejoicing came
That Greatest One and joined himself to John,
Himself the Holy One, to be baptized,
To honor the mighty preacher and his work,
And that he might forever identify
Himself as brother unto sinful man,
Making complete his offered saviorship.
Glad, O so glad was he to hear
The news, and find the man with lips of fire
Heaven to open and let the Spirit free,
Glad now that God's own messenger had come
To break the way he longed to enter on.
Beautiful all the story of Jesus and John,
Greatest incident yet in the kingdom of God,
Could we sing it, wonderful poem that by itself.

What a time for all it was, what a turning came
Of the wayward children's hearts to the fathers again,
What melting, what tears, what earnestness everywhere,
What a man of God, like Elijah of old, appeared,
He that first must come and all restore,
How all that mighty prophecy had been,
Took youth again, how hearts were ready made,
How God from the heavens answered there and named
His Son, how the Spirit fell, how herald John
Bowing, worshipping, eager, hopeful, glad,
Sure now, had pointed out the lamb of God,
And Jesus, by the old time prophets declared
A thousand times, now by the last o' the line
Is marked and blessed and started on his way,
By God and by earth's greatest witnessed to,
Gets his first disciples there from John,
And finds a world nor synagogue- nor temple-bound,
Ready his beautiful message to hear,
O 'twas revival greatest the world had seen,
And how God owned it.

O ye great blatant mouths
Who set your spindling wisdom up 'gainst God,
And revivals of religion dare deride,
Look on this picture. Was evangelist John a fool,

THE COMING OF JOHN—*Continued*

Deluded by abnormalities of mind,
Fired on? Were all these weeping, questioning folk
Fools too? The Spirit you blaspheme by the word.
God owned it, the greatest, truest revival yet,
Pivotal point in all the history of time,
He made it occasion Himself to come into the world.
And all because a man, then God, had come,
Both for service and for witnessing.
John left a priesthood, privileged, corrupt,
And left his selfish, desert separateness,
Both to brother be and testify
'Gainst sin in high and low, respecting not
The face of man—his baptism levelling all—
Kindly to publican, soldier, the common man,
Yet how he dared to scathe the pharisee—
They who rested their pride on Abraham's blood,
Whose deeds were damnable, as their souls were mean.
And God rejoiced in John. And he, the king,
Left his carpenter shop; yea he left
Heaven above and all his princedom there,
That he might witness and serve and in the end,
In uttermost service save a dying world.
To neither was service alone the accepted way
God had ordained to bring the kingdom in.
'Twas not the over-trumped "social service" thing,
Preached or practiced by hair-brained women and wights,
Distorted by schools and thinnest of intellect cults,
Who never dare witness for Christ or 'gainst the world's sin,
With little religious experience to witness from,
But go ninnying to pamper and feed and entertain,
And make only worse a lazy and cavilling world.—
Salvation by works the one miserable tenet they hold.
Nor was it to stand apart from struggling men,
And curse them as lost with a "holier than thou" attitude.
'Twas calling sin sin, and right right, and God God, everywhere,
Marvelous marriage of two great heavenly truths
To witness and serve, that both bigot and modernist lose,
O 'twas that out clear standing 'gainst evil each time,
'Twas that being at one with God for the holiness,
Which alone heaven makes—'twas to mightily witness and die,
The way that made martyrs and saints that we sing and adore,
Defying of proud sinful man, whatever his name,—
That was the one glory way, and yet 'twas to have

THE COMING OF JOHN—*Continued*

That feeling for men, that hatred of accursed pride
 That draws near, lives close to, suffers with, toils for and dies,
 That love and brotherhood more may rule in the world.
 'Twas John in camel-hair cloak finding his food,
 Making servant of none, but seeking that he may bless all,
 'Twas Jesus ungirding and washing the feet of the twelve.
 Neither would ever plan for or ask man to do
 A thing he would not do himself. Ah heaven is real,
 When sin is thus driven out, and pride that makes slaves,
 That makes service all on one side, that makes hate and war
 And hell, is denied its destroying place in the heart.
 Yes, great revival, and great beginning of all
 Was that, bringing democracy true in the world,
 A brotherhood, John-like and Christ-like forever to last,
 A kingdom in which he alone is ruler and king,
 Because he dared most for truth, and right 'gainst sin,
 Because he loved most, and served most, and because we,
 Who tried sin and self, and all our own foolish ways,
 Have repented and turned and cast them forever behind,—
 Because we, like violent men, we choose him king,
 We make him king, every soul of us come in time,
 No other forever and ever we'll have for king.

John's work is done. Faded and stilled is "the voice,"
 A harlot dances, a weakling king goes mad.
 The price of that bewitchment is that voice.
 But what matter is it to holy martyr John?
 His testimony he has sealed most perfectly.
 Think not of dark Macherus and the gloom,
 Thus God doth always glorify his own.
 But think of Him and all His wondrous ways,
 How perfect are His works. He raiseth up,
 Humbleth low, He doeth as He will,
 And when we look heaven is opened again,
 And God and glory how we see anew!
 Jesus the King is on His royal way,
 Yea, like a King he ever, forever comes.
 And let us bow and worship and take heed,
 The lesson ever taught to you and me,
 The King can never come into the world,
 'Less having left its hermitage behind,
 A voice, my voice, your voice, go first.

HIS PLEADING—(Hymn: Tune G. H. No. 280.)

Jesus the Savior comes pleading for you,
All the dark valley alone He came through,—
So sinful, so careless, and yet it is true,
Pleading with you, pleading with you,
Prince of God seeking and pleading with you,
Pleading with you, with you!

Jesus the Savior is nailed on a tree,
That perfect His seeking and pleading may be,
Dying to win you and love you, now see,—
Pleading with you, pleading with you,
Prince of God cruelly nailed on a tree,
Pleading with you, with you!

Jesus the Savior now pleads at the throne,
Pleads now with God till thy ransom be won,
Nail printed hands lifts the Crucified One,
Pleading for you, pleading for you,
Prince of God pleading for you at the throne,
Pleading for you, for you!

O why goes He pleading in heaven and earth,
What finds He in you of such valuable worth
'Tis to love you and win you into the new birth,—
Pleading with you and pleading for you,
Prince of God pleading in heaven and earth,
Pleading with you and for you!

OVER THE GULF

Luke 15:17—*But when he cameth himself he said.....I perish.*
Tune: Gospel Hymns No. 559.

Come back, O lost one,
Turn, turn today,
Turn in thy wilderness,
Plain is the way.
Give up thy heart of stone,
Make all thy sorrow known,
Ere thy mercy day be gone,
Sure God will hear.

OVER THE GULF—*Continued*

Come back, O lost one,
 Cry out thy call,
 Break through the pride wall,
 Tell, tell it all.
 Out on the desert air,
 Cry thy sadness and despair,
 Long God has listened there,
 Thy word to hear.

Come back, O lost one,
 Come unto Me,
 I seek the crushed heart,
 I died for thee."
 God calls for thee today,
 Cry to Him, no more delay,
 When tears cast the world away,
 God delights to hear.

GLAD SHALT THOU BE

Invite them today,
 If they say thee "nay,"
 And thy heart is hurt with sorrow,—
 So glad shalt thou be for duty done,
 Pointing them to the Crucified One,
 In thy long tomorrow.

RELIGION

Wear out your spirit in search profound,
 All faiths and philosophies deeply sound,
 Seeking for rest to your weary soul,
 Trying to fix upon some goal
 To your heart wand'rings—you'll come out at last,
 Where all lonely pilgrims of the past,
 Came so simply, out of their night

RELIGION—*Continued*

Of stumbling and groping to this only light.
So missed yet so gentle, so perfect, so bright,
God just saves, just takes all the care,
Just takes the soul over that's in despair.
Go search and dream and long for some joy,
Something real to do your heart to employ,
That alway to be happy you may be sure,—
In all life's realm there's naught will endure
For this purpose—I'm preaching cold truth,
I'm here describing no fever of youth—
There's nothing will ever scatter the night,
Nothing keeps shining for you the light,
Sure and gentle, steady and bright,
But to lead other souls where God takes the care,
To see for yourself that thing wondrous fair,—
The great God uplifting poor souls from despair.

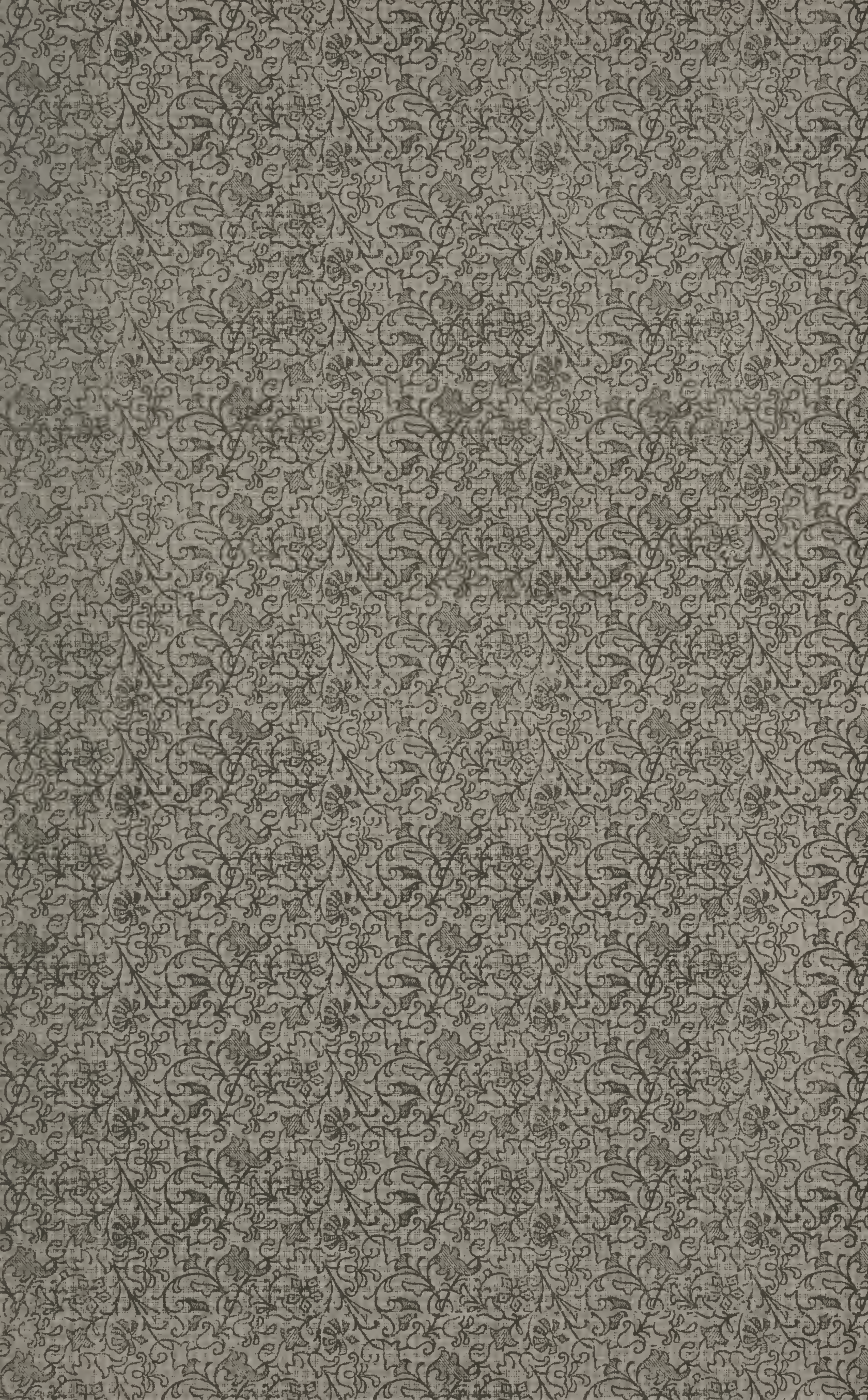
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